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OLD STACHCAN.

see page 291, Vol. I.

HIGHLAND RAMBLES,

AND

LONG LEGENDS TO SHORTEN THE WAY.

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au

BY

SIR THOMAS DICK LAUDER, BART.

AUTHOR OF "AN ACCOUNT OF THE MORAY FLOODS," "THE WOLFE OF BADENOCH," "LOCHANDHU," ETC.

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ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK,

BOOKSELLERS TO HIS MAJESTY FOR SCOTLAND.

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FIRST VOLUME.

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TO THE

RIGHT HON. THE COUNTESS GREY.

DEAR LADY GREY,

With your permission, I now dedicate these volumes to you. I should do so with great diffidence, did I not know that every thing connected with Scotland is interesting to you.

By associating them with a name so universally revered, I give them value; whilst I afford to myself an opportunity of expressing my admiration of those many virtues and amiable qualities which have rendered

it so much beloved in your person by all ranks who have the good fortune to come within reach of their influence; and I have thus also the satisfaction of expressing my warm sense of the kindness I have received from you and Lord Grey ever since I have had the honour of being known to you, as well as of assuring you that I am,

With every possible respect,

DEAR LADY GREY,

Very sincerely and faithfully yours,

THOS. DICK LAUDER.

HIGHLAND RAMBLES.

——"My cap was the bonnet, my cloak was the plaid.
On chieftains long perish'd, my memory ponder'd,
As daily I strode through the pine-cover'd glade;
I sought not my home, till the day's dying glory
Gave place to the rays of the bright polar star;
For fancy was cheer'd by traditional story."——

HIGHLAND RAMBLES.

SCOTTISH MOORLAND SCENERY.

The scenery of the less cultivated parts of our native Scotland, may, generally speaking, be said to be chequered, as human life is with its events; for as, during our pilgrimage here on earth, evil continually succeeds good, and good evil, so are beauty and deformity seen to alternate with each other on the simple face of Caledonia. A long stretch of dreary and uninteresting hill country is often found to extend between two rich or romantic valleys, so that the lover of nature has to plod his weary way from the one to the other, over many a mile of sterile desert; and, if he be a pedestrian, through many

a burn, and many a slough too, with little to disturb him, save the sudden *whirr* of the grouse, as he bounds off through the air with the velocity of a cricket-ball,—or the sharp *frisp* of the snipe as he rises like the cork from a brisk bottle of champagne, —or the wailing *teeweet* of the green plover, who, like some endless *seccatore*, most perseveringly follows his track, unceasingly boring him with his dull flapping, and his tiresome cry.

When not broken in upon by any such incidents, these wildernesses are sometimes rather valuable to a solitary traveller.—They afford him time for rumination whilst he is traversing them.—They give him leisure to chew the cud of reflection, and he is thus enabled to digest the beauties of the valley which he has last devoured, before he proceeds to feast upon the charms about to be presented to him by that to which he is hastening. But whatever may be the advantages to be derived from journeying in any such single state of blessedness, I am disposed to think that the man who has a cheerful companion or two associated with him in his pilgrimage, will not be much inclined to wish them absent in such parts of the way; and as I do not think that either his moral or his physical digestion will be in any

degree impaired by society, I am quite sure that his intellectual enjoyment will be thereby much increased.

My own experience convinced me of the truth of this, one fine Autumnal morning, when, in company with two friends, I left the romantic valley of the Findhorn, to cross the moorlands towards Grantown, a village which may be called the capital of Strathspey. The Sun that rose upon us, as we took our staves in hand to begin that day's walk, had continued to display a brighter and merrier countenance than any, perhaps, which I had ever seen showing face within the precincts of this vapour-girt island of ours. Yet vain were his friendly efforts to throw a glow of cheerfulness over the brown heaths, and the black plashy bogs almost entirely covering the tame unmeaning undulations of the country before us. A scene apparently less calculated to furnish food for remark or conversation, can hardly well be conceived. But when the imagination is not altogether asleep, a very trifling hint will set it a working; and so it was, that the innumerable grey, ghastly-looking pine stocks of other years, that were every where seen pointing out of the peat-mosses, from

amidst tufts of the waving cotton grass, and wiry rushes, and gaudy ranunculuses, quickly carried our minds back to former ages by a natural chain of connection, filled them with magnificent ideal pictures of those interminable forests which completely covered Scotland during the earlier periods of its history, and immediately furnished us with a subject for talk.

AUTHOR.—You see yonder hill, called *the Aitnoch*. Although it is, as you may easily perceive, the highest in all this neighbourhood, yet an extensive plain on its summit, almost entirely peat-moss, is so thickly set with the stocks and roots of pine trees, such as these you are now looking at, and all fixed, too, like these, in the growing position, that, if the boles and branches were still standing on them, it would absolutely be a difficult matter for a deer, or even for a dog, to force a passage through among them.

GRANT.—I should like much to mount the hill to examine the plain you speak of. Well as I am acquainted with this north country, I never heard of it before.

AUTHOR.—It will cost us little more than the additional fatigue created by its rather rough and

steep ascent to do so, for it is not quite an hundred miles out of our way.

CLIFFORD.—Phoo!—we are not to be tied to ways of any kind. Let us climb the hill then by all means.—But, to return to what you were talking about, can you tell us how, and for what purpose, these vast forests were annihilated?

AUTHOR.—The charred surfaces which most of these stocks and roots still exhibit, sufficiently prove that fire must have been the grand instrument of their destruction. The logs which originally grew upon them, but which are now found lying horizontally under the present surface, all bear testimony to the same fact in a greater or lesser degree. Many of these, indeed, when dug up, present a very curious appearance, the nether part being left almost entire, whilst the upper side has been hollowed like a spout. This must have been effected by the flames, which naturally continued to smoulder on the upper surfaces of the fallen trunks, whilst the moisture of the ground where they fell extinguished them below.

CLIFFORD.—Come,—that is all very well as to the *how*,—now, let us have your *wherefore*.

AUTHOR.—As to the causes of the devouring

element being let loose among these aboriginal forests, we might speculate long enough, for they were probably many and various. Accidental fires may have been kindled by the rude inhabitants, which afterwards spread destruction far and wide, as they often do now in the forests of America. Or they may have been raised with the intention of driving away wild beasts, or of aiding in their destruction—of annoying enemies—or even for the more simple purpose of clearing spots of ground for hunting or for pasture. The causes may have been trivial enough in themselves. You, Grant, who have travelled so much in Switzerland, must be aware of the practice which still prevails there, of burning down large patches of gigantic pine timber on the sides of the Alps, for no other reason than to allow the sun and the moisture to reach the surface of the ground, so as thereby to increase the quantity and value of the pasture growing beneath.

GRANT.—Yes, I can vouch for what you say with regard to the practice in Switzerland, and I am much inclined to think with you, that instead of attributing the fall of these mighty Caledonian forests, as many are disposed to do, to some one great and general catastrophe, we ought

rather to place their ruin to the account of a combination and reiteration of fortuitous causes, by the increasing frequency of the repetition of which they were rapidly extirpated in detail. Indeed, in support of what I now say, I remember having heard a well authenticated tradition of exactly such an accidental conflagration, which is said to have taken place so late as the year 1640.

AUTHOR.—I should be glad to hear the particulars of it. Do you think you can recal them?

GRANT.—I think I can, but you will perhaps find the story rather a long one.

CLIFFORD.—Long or short, let us have it by all means. And, let me tell you for your comfort, my good fellow, none of Chaucer's pilgrims could have begun a story under circumstances so favourable. A parliamentary speech itself might have some chance of being listened to if uttered to one whilst passing through so dull a country as this—that is to say, without one's gun and pointers.

THE BURNING OF MACFARLANE'S FOREST OF BEN LAOIDH.

THE sun had not yet disappeared behind the mountains on the western side of Loch Lomond, and the unruffled surface of the lake was gleaming with his parting rays, when the Laird of Macfarlane, as he was returning from the chase, looked down from the ridge of a hill over the glorious scene that lay extended beneath him. His eyes travelled far along the calm expanse of the waters, till they lost themselves in the distance, amid the tufted and clustering islands, which lay glittering in the fleeting light like gems on the bosom of Beauty,—he then recalled them along the romantic undulations and irregularities of its shores, to

dwell with peculiar pride and inward satisfaction on the wide stretch of those rich and smiling pastures which he could call his own, and on the numerous herds of cattle which his vassals were then driving to their home-grazings for the night. All was still and silent around, save when the quiet of the balmy evening air was gently broken by those rural sounds, which, when blended together and softened by distance, as they then were to Macfarlane's ear, never fail to produce a musical harmony, that thrills to the very heart of the true lover of nature. The lowing of the cattle—the occasional prolonged shouts of the herdsmen—the watchful bark of their attendant dogs, careful to permit no individual of their charge to stray from the main body—the shrill and solitary scream of the eagle, coming from the upper regions of the sky, as he soared to his place of repose amid the towering crags of Ben Lomond,—and, lastly, the mingled cawing of the retreating army of rooks as they wheeled away in black battalions, to seek for undisturbed roost among the branches of that forest which then filled the whole country, from Loch Lomond to Glen Fruin, with a dark and interminable sea of foli-[illegible] Such were the sounds that came in mellow

chorus on the delighted ear of Macfarlane. He sat him down on a mossy stone to rest for a while, that his eyes and his ears might have fuller enjoyment. His faithful sleuth-hounds and braches, overcome with fatigue, quickly stretched out their wearied bodies in ready slumber around him; and his numerous followers no less gladly availed themselves of their lord's example, to ease their tired shoulders of the heavy loads which the success of that day's woodcraft had imposed upon them.

Macfarlane was a stern chief of the olden time. Yet, what heart, however stark or rude, but must have been subdued and softened beneath the warm influence of those emotions which such a scene, and such sounds, and such an evening combined to excite? As he sat apart from his people, he was melted into a mood of feeling which he had rarely experienced during his life of feudal turmoil. His thoughts insensibly stole upwards in secret musings, which gradually exhaled themselves in grateful orisons to that Heaven, whence he felt that all the blessings he possessed had so liberally flowed; and, although these prayers were inwardly breathed in the formal and set terms prescribed by his church, yet his soul more fully and effectually suffused it-

self into them, than it had ever done before. That mysterious and uncontrollable desire which man often feels to hold converse with his Creator alone, gradually stole upon him; and, having ordered his attendants to precede him, he arose soon after their departure, to saunter homewards through the twilight, in that calm and dreamy state of religious reflection, which had rarely ever before visited his stormy mind.

As he slowly descended the mountain side, that slopes down to the Arroquhar, the course of the little rill, which he followed, led him into a grove of natural birches, and his silent footstep betrayed him into an involuntary intrusion on the privacy of two lovers. These were his foster-brother, Angus Macfarlane, and Ellen, a beautiful maiden, who was about to become his wife. The wedding-day was fixed, as the Laird of Macfarlane well knew; and as his heart was at this moment brimful of kindly feeling, the sight of this betrothed pair made it run over with benevolence.

"What ho! my fair Ellen," cried he, as chased away by her modest confusion, her sylph-like form was disappearing among the tender foliage of the birchen bushes like some delicate thing of air;

"dost fear the face of thy chief?—Knowest thou not that Macfarlane's most earnest wish ever is to be held as the father of his meanest clansman? and think ye that he would be less than a father to thee, sad posthumous pledge of the worthiest warrior that ever followed the banner of Loch Sloy, or for whom a gallant clan ever sung a wailing lament?—But, ha!" exclaimed he, as he kindly took her hand to detain her; "why dost thou look so sad? By this light, such as it is, it would seem as if the tear-drop had been in that blue eye of thine. My worthy Angus could never have caused this? He loves thee too well, ever to give pain to so soft and confiding a heart as thine."

"Angus never could wilfully give me pain," said the maiden earnestly, and throwing down her eyes, and blushing deeply as she said so.

"Ha!" said Macfarlane, in a playful manner, "now I think on't, yours may have been the tears of repentance, seeing that you most wickedly have seduced my trusty master herdsman from his duty this evening, and that he hath left his people and his beasts to take care of one another, that he might come over the hill here, to whisper soft things into thine ear, under the clustering wood-

bine, that wreathes itself through the holly there, and fills the air thus with its delicious perfume."

"My good lord, I would humbly acknowledge my fault, and crave your pardon," replied Angus; "I must confess that I did leave the lads and the cattle, to come to keep tryst here with Ellen. But albeit that she had some small share of blame in this; her tears fell not from compunction for any such fault. Say, shall I tell the cause, Ellen?—They fell because of a strange vision which her old aunt Margery saw last night."

"A vision!" exclaimed Macfarlane, seriously; "tell me, Ellen, what did she see?"

"It was last night, my lord," replied Ellen, that my aunt Margery came over to my mother's cottage to settle some matters regarding—a—a—I mean, to speak with my mother of some little family affairs, which kept her better than an hour after nightfall,—when, as she was crossing the hill again in her way home, she suddenly beheld a red glowing gleam in the sky, and, turning to look behind her, the whole of the forest below seemed to be on fire. She rubbed her eyes in her astonishment, and when she looked again the vision had disappeared."

"Strange!" said Macfarlane, seriously.

"But this was not all," continued Ellen, with increased earnestness of manner, and shuddering as she spoke, "for, by the light that still gleamed in the sky, she beheld a dark object at some distance from her on the heath. It moved towards the spot where she was. Trembling with fear, she stood aside to observe it, and on it continued to come, gliding without sound. A single stream of faint light fell upon it from a broken part of the sky, and showed the figure and the features of—of—of you, Macfarlane."

"What, my figure!—my features!" exclaimed the laird, in a disturbed tone, and then, commanding himself, he quietly added, "Awell, and saw she aught else?"

"She did, my lord," added Ellen, much agitated, "for, borne over your right shoulder she beheld a human corse; the head was hanging down, and the pale fixed features were those of—of—my betrothed husband!" Overpowered by her feelings, Ellen sank down on a mossy bank, and wept bitterly.

"Let not these gloomy fancies enter your head at a time like this, Ellen," said Macfarlane, roused

Designed & Etched by William Dyce, A.S.A. &c.

MARGERY'S VISION.

see page 14, Vol. I.

by her sobbing from the fit of gloomy abstraction into which her narration had thrown him. "If not altogether an unaccountable and unreal freak of imagination, it can be interpreted no otherwise than felicitously for you. The burning forest is but a type of the extent and the warmth of your mutual affection, and the dead figure of Angus only shadows forth the fact that your love will endure with life itself."

"There needed not such a vision to tell us these truths," said Angus energetically.

"Yet do we often see matters as palpable as these, as wonderfully vouched for by supernatural means," said the chief. "Get thee home then, Ellen; and do thou see her safe, Angus, and let her not suffer her young mind to brood on such dreary and distressing phantasies as seem now to fill it. Be yours the joyous anticipations of the bride and bridegroom three days before they are made one for ever. Ere three days go round your indissoluble union shall be blessed by the happiest influence of the warm sunshine of your chief's substantial favour. Meanwhile, may good angels guard you both!—Good night."

With these words, Macfarlane sought his way

home, musing as he went, impressed, more than he even wished to own to himself, with the strange tale he had heard, and when he could contrive to rid himself of it, turning in his thoughts from time to time certain benevolent schemes which suggested themselves to him for the liberal establishment of Angus and his bride.

The next day's sun had hardly reddened the eastern sky, so as to exhibit the huge dark mass of Ben Lomond with a sharp and well-defined outline on its glowing surface, when the herdsmen of the Laird of Macfarlane arose and left their huts, with the intention of driving their cattle across the dewy pastures back to the slopes of the mountains. The thick summer mist still hung over the lower grounds; and the men wandered about, hallooing to each other whilst employed in actively looking for the animals of which they had the charge. They had left them the previous evening feeding in numerous groups among herbage of the most luxuriant description. They were well aware that it was much too fragrant not to tie them, by the sweetest and securest of all tethers, to the vicinity of those spots where they had been collected in herds; and they were quite sure that the animals

never would have left them voluntarily. But all their shouting and all their searching appeared to be unsuccessful, and the more unsuccessful they were likely to be, the more were their exertions increased. All was clamour, confusion, and uncertainty, till sunrise had somewhat dispelled the mist that had hitherto rolled its dense and silent waves over the bottom of the valley; and then one herdsman, more active and intelligent than the rest, having climbed the mountain that sends forth its root to form the boundary between the enchanting mazes of the beautiful oak and birch-fringed lakes of Ballochan, and the long stretch of Loch Lomond's inland sea, and having looked up Glen Falloch, and far and wide around him to the full extent that his eyes could reach,—

"We are harried!" shouted he in Gaelic, to his anxiously inquiring comrades below. "Not a horn of them is to be seen!—I can perceive a large herd of deer afar off yonder, clustered together in the open forest glade, but not a horn or hide of cow, ox, quey, or stirk, do I see within all the space that my eyes can light upon; and unless the muckle stone, the *Clach-nan-Tairbh*, down below there, has covered them, as tradition

tells us it covered the two wild bulls, when the fury of their battle was said to have been so great as to shake it down from the very craig upon them, our beasts are harried every cloot o' them!"

"My curses on the catterans that took them then!" exclaimed Angus Macfarlane, the master of the herdsmen—"and my especial curses, too, because they have thus harried them the very night when I chanced to be wandering! But if they are above the surface of the earth we must find them, —so come, lads, look about ye sharply."

Like an eager pack of hounds newly uncoupled, who have been taught by the huntsman's well-understood voice, that a fresh scent is at hand, the herdsmen now went dodging about, looking for the track of those who had so adroitly driven off a *creagh* so very numerous, and so immensely valuable. Long experience and much practice in such matters soon enabled Angus to discover the country towards which the freshest hoof-prints pointed, and in a short time the whole band were in full and hot pursuit of the reavers.

"They are Lochaber men, I'll warrant me!" said Angus, whose sagacity and acuteness left him seldom mistaken; and guessing shrewdly at the

route they would probably take, he resolved to follow them cautiously with his assistants, that he might dog their footsteps and spy out their motions, whilst he sent one back as a messenger to the Laird of Macfarlane, to report to him the daring robbery that had been committed on him.

If you have been able to conceive the calm that settled upon Macfarlane's mind, when the placidity of the previous evening had brought it so much into harmony with all the surrounding objects of nature, that it might almost have been said to have reflected the unruffled image of Loch Lomond itself, you may easily imagine that the intelligence which he now received operated on him as some whirlwind would have done on the peaceful bosom of the lake. The eyes of the dark-browed chief kindled up into a blaze of rage, and shot forth red lightnings, and his soul was lashed into a sudden and furious storm ere the messenger had time to unfold half of his information.

"What! all harried, said you?—Bid the pipers play *the gathering!*—Shout our war-cry of Loch Sloy!—We'll after them with what of our clansmen may be mustered in haste. By the blessed

rood, we'll follow them to Lochaber itself, but we'll have back our bestial!"

But Macfarlane was not one who allowed his rage to render him incapable of adopting the proper measures for the sure attainment of his object. A numerous party of his clan was speedily assembled, all boiling with the same indignation that excited their chief. Macfarlane himself saw that each man was equipped in the most efficient manner for celerity of movement; and when all were in order, he instantly set forward at their head, taking that direction which was indicated to him by the intelligence which the messenger had brought him.

In their rapid march through the great forest, they threaded its intricacies, partly trusting to their local knowledge, partly to their leader's judgment of the probable route of the reavers, partly guided by the fresh tracks which they now and then fell in with, and partly by certain signal marks which the wily Angus had from time to time left behind him, by breaking the boughs down in a particular direction. Once or twice they encountered some individual of the party of herdsmen in advance, whom Angus had station-

ed in their way to give his chief intelligence; and at last, as the sun was fast declining towards the west, another man appeared, who came to meet them in breathless haste.

"Well!—what tidings now?" demanded the Laird.

"They are Lochaber men, sure enough," replied the man.

"Pshaw! I never doubted that," said Macfarlane, impatiently;—but, quick!—tell me whither you have tracked them. We have no time to lose."

"I'm thinking you may take your own leisure, Macfarlane," replied the man, "for I'm in the belief that they are lodged for the best part of this night, tethered as they are with the tired legs of the beasts." And so he went on to explain that they had been traced into what was then one of the thickest parts of the forest to a spot lying between Loch Sloy and what is now the wide moss of the *Caoran*, stretching south-east from Ben Laoidh.

"Then they cannot be far distant from the bothy of the Lochan, where I slept when we last hunted in that quarter?" said the Chief.

"Sure enough, you have guessed it, Macfarlane, replied the man, "sure enough they are there, and

Angus and Parlane, and the rest, are watching them. By all appearance there's a strong party of the limmers, and I'll warrant me they keep a good guard."

"Let them guard as they may, our cattle are our own again," said the Chief, with a laugh of anticipated triumph; "Saint Mary! but we'll make these gentlemen of Lochaber pay for their incivility, and for the unwilling tramp they have given both to us and to our beasts! Not a man of them shall escape to tell the tale!"

A general exclamation burst from his followers. "Not a man of them!" was echoed around, and they besought Macfarlane to lead them instantly to the slaughter.

"No!" replied he sternly, "I have said, and I now swear by the roof-tree of my fathers, and by the graves where they rest, that not a man of these vermin shall escape! and Macfarlane has never yet said, for weal or for woe, what he did not make good to the very letter. But no advantage must be lost by rashness. Every precaution must be taken coolly and deliberately, so that not a man of them may ever return to parent, to wife, or to child. Lochaber shall wail for them from one end

of it to the other, and the men of that country shall pause long before they again attempt to lay hand even on a cat belonging to Macfarlane."

Having thus checked their impatience, he marched them slowly onwards, without noise, till he discovered a thicket by the side of a brook, where, sheltered and concealed by an overhanging bank, his men could rest and refresh themselves without being observed, and there he patiently halted to wait for the night, and for farther intelligence.

Impenetrable darkness had settled over the forest, and the Macfarlanes had sat long in silence, listening eagerly to catch the distant but welcome sound of the lowing of the cattle, that came on their ears faintly at intervals, and assured them that they were now within a short march of their enemies; when the cracking of the withered branches of the firs at some distance a-head of them, made them stand to their arms and look sharply out from their ambush. Human footsteps were evidently heard approaching. Not a word was uttered by those in the thicket, but every eye that peered from it was steadily fixed on a natural break among the trees growing on a

bank, that rose with a gentle slope immediately in front of their position, where the obscurity being less absolutely impervious, they might at least be enabled to see something like the form of any object that came, however imperfectly it might be defined. The sounds slowly advanced, till at length one human figure only appeared on the knoll that crowned the bank. It stood for some moments, as if scrutinizing every bush that grew in the hollow below. It moved—and then it seemed to stop, as if in hesitation. Macfarlane's henchman raised his arquebuss to his shoulder, and proceeded to light a match for its lock. The click of the flint and steel made the figure start.

"It is a patrole of the Lochaber men," whispered the henchman, raising the piece to his shoulder to take aim; "I'll warrant they have got hold of Angus and the rest. But I'll make sure of that fellow at any rate."

"Not for your life!" replied Macfarlane in the same tone, whilst he arrested his hand. "The whole forest would ring with the report, and all would be lost."

Seizing a cross-bow from one of his immediate attendants, he bent it, and fitted a quarrel-bolt

to it, and, having pointed it at the object on the summit of the knoll, he challenged in such an under tone of voice, as might not spread alarm to any great distance, whilst, at the same time, he was quite prepared to shoot with deadly certainty of aim, the moment he saw the figure make the smallest effort to retreat.

"Ho, there!" cried the chief.

"Ho, there!" replied the figure, starting at the sound, and turning his head to look eagerly around him.

"Where grew your bow, and how is it drawn?" demanded Macfarlane, in the same tone.

"It grew in the isles of Loch Lomond, and it is drawn for Loch Sloy," was the ready reply.

A long breath was inhaled and expired by the lungs of every anxious Macfarlane, as he recognized the well-known voice of Angus, the master herdsman.

"Advance, my trusty Angus," said the chief; "the brake is full of friends."

Angus had never left his post of watch, until he was satisfied that the Lochaber men were in such a state of repose as to ensure to him time enough to return to meet his chief. He then planted some of his people to keep their eyes on the enemy, whilst

he found his way back alone, to make Macfarlane fully aware of their position. The plunderers lay about a mile from the spot where the chief had halted. The great body of them, consisting of some thirty or more in number, had retired into the hunting-bothy, before the door of which a sentinel was posted, to give alarm in case of assault. To prevent the cattle from straying away, they had driven them together into a large open hollow, immediately in front of the knoll on which the bothy stood; and to take away all risk of their escape or abstraction, four men were stationed at equal distances from each other, so as to surround them. The poor animals were so jaded with their rapid journey, that they drew themselves around the shallow little *lochan* or pool in the bottom of the hollow, from which the bothy had its name, and having lain down there, they showed so much unwillingness to rise from their recumbent position, that the watchmen soon ceased to have any apprehension of their running away. The men rolled themselves up in their plaids, therefore, and each making a bed for himself among the long heather, they indulged in that sort of half slumber, to which active-bodied and vacant-minded people must natu-

rally yield the moment they are brought into an attitude of rest.

Macfarlane had no sooner made himself perfectly master of all these circumstances, than he at once conceived his murderous plans—took his resolution—gave his orders; and, having cautioned every man of his party to be hushed as the grave, they proceeded, under the guidance of Angus, to steal like cats upon their prey—foot falling softly and slowly after foot, so that if they produced any sound at all, it was liker the rustle of some zephyr, passing gently over the heather tops, than the pressure of mortal tread.

Whilst they were proceeding in this cautious manner, Angus, who was at the head of the men, was observed suddenly to raise his cross-bow, and to point it in the direction of Macfarlane, who was, at that moment, some ten or fifteen paces before the party. Filled with horror, the men who were nearest to him sprang upon him to prevent so great a treason as the murder of their chief. Angus was felled to the ground—but his bolt had already flown—and, with a sure aim too, for down fell among the heath, weltering in his blood, and with an expiring groan, not the chief of the Macfarlanes, but one of

the Lochaber men. The quick eye of Angus had detected him standing half concealed by the huge trunk of a tree, exactly in the very path of the chief. Three more steps would have brought Macfarlane within reach of the very dirk of the assassin, which was already unsheathed, and ready to have been plunged in his bosom. Amazement fell upon all of them for some moments. Macfarlane could with difficulty comprehend what had happened; but when he was at length made to understand the truth, he ran towards Angus. He was already raised in the arms of those of his friends who had so rashly judged and punished him, but who were now sufficiently ashamed and repentant of their precipitation.

"Look up, my brave Angus," said Macfarlane to his clansman, as he began to revive; "look up to thy chief, grateful as he is for that life which thou hast preserved to him!—Heaven forbid that it were at the expense of thine own life; and that, too, taken by the too zealous hands of Macfarlanes."

"Fear not for me," replied Angus, somewhat faintly, "I was but stunned by the blow; and he that gave it me would have been well excused if

he had given me a death-wound, if I could have been justly suspected of traitorie to my chief;—and well I wot the bare suspicion of such villainy is wound enough to me."

"Nay, nay, Angus," said Macfarlane; "you must not think so deeply of this accident. The judgment was necessarily as sudden as the action, and no wonder that it was faulty. But, how came this stray man to be patroling about? Are we betrayed or discovered, think ye?"

"I would fain trust that we are not," replied Angus. "As we watched, we saw one man leave the bothy to go out and spy around their post, as we guessed; but, as we afterwards saw a man come in again, we took him to be the same, when, I'll warrant me, he has been the fellow whom the first man went out to relieve. But, if we were deceived, the fault is luckily cured now, for this is doubtless the very man who——"

"Aye," said the chief interrupting him; "the very man, indeed, who would have certainly taken my life, had it not been for thine alert and timely aid. What do I not owe thee, my trusty Angus! But, stay; let him sit down and rest for a brief space, till he recovers his strength, and then, if I

mistake not, we shall bloodily revenge his passing injury."

They now again moved forward, with much circumspection, until they at length began to perceive a distant light, which occasionally twinkled in advance of them. As they proceeded, the light became broader, though it was still broken by the intervention of the thick set stems of the forest. But after groping their way onwards with redoubled care for some hundred yards farther, it burst forth fully and steadily on their eyes, as the trees ceased suddenly, and they found themselves close to the very edge of the open hollow, described by Angus, and in the middle of the herdsmen who had been left by him as spies. After using their eyes very earnestly and intently for a little time, they could now perceive the surface of the shallow pool, which lay in the still shadow, in the centre of the bottom below them, and they could dimly descry the dusky mass of cattle lying crowded together around it. As the Macfarlanes stood peering into the obscurity, a low and melancholy voice of complaint would every now and then burst from some individual beast, reminiscent of the rich Loch Lomond pasture, from which it had been driven, and bitterly

sensible of the sad change of fortunes which a few hours had brought to it. The figures of the four watchmen were as yet invisible; but the whole face of the opposite knoll being free from wood, the door of the hunting bothy was clearly defined by the bickering blaze of faggots that burned in the middle of the floor within, distinctly displaying the sentinel as he walked to and fro across the field of its light. The thick wooding of the forest, that encircled this natural opening, came climbing up the rear of the knoll until its tall pines clustered over the back of the bothy itself, and the existence of high grounds rising with considerable abruptness at no great distance, if not previously known, could only have been guessed at by the greater density of the shade which prevailed over every thing that was beneath the lofty horizon, the limits of which were easily distinguished by the partial gleam that proceeded from the sky above it. There the clouds were now every moment growing thinner and thinner, as the driving rack skimmed across the face of heaven, with a velocity that proclaimed an approaching hurricane.

In obedience to the orders already given to them by their chief, the Macfarlanes retreated a few steps

into the thick part of the skirting forest, the dark foliage of which arose every where around this naturally open space, and beneath its impenetrable concealment they made a silent movement to right and left, during which they posted single men at equal distances from each other, until they had completely surrounded the hollow, the bothy, and the whole party of Lochaber men, together with their booty. This manœuvre was no sooner silently and successfully executed, than four choice young herdsmen, remarkable for their daring courage as well as for their strength and agility, were selected by Angus. These had well and accurately noted the respective spots where each of the Lochaber watchmen had lain down, and after some consultation, each had one of them assigned to him as his own peculiar object of attack. Having gone around the edge of the wood till each man was opposite to his slumbering enemy, they glided down the sloping edges of the hollow, armed with their dirks alone, and they crept on their bellies towards the bottom, drawing themselves like snakes silently and imperceptibly through the long heather. Full time was to be allowed for each man to reach his prey; and although the period was not in reality

very long, yet you will easily believe that it passed over the heads of the Macfarlanes with a degree of anxiety that made it appear long enough. The moment the four herdsmen began to descend into the deep shadow which filled the sides of the hollow, their figures were entirely lost to the view of those who were stationed within the skirt of the surrounding forest. Every heart beat with agonizing suspense. The smallest accident might ruin all. An occasional prolonged moan was heard to come from some of the cattle, and all felt persuaded, however contrary it might be to reason, that each succeeding recurrence of it must awaken the slumberers. But at length, whether from the operation of some peculiar instinct, or from some remarkable sense of smell which these creatures have occasionally proved that they possess, it happened that they really did become sensible of the approach of some of those who were wont to attend on them, I know not; but all of a sudden some ten or a dozen of them sprang up to their legs, and changed their long low moan into that sharp and piercing rout into which it is frequently known to graduate.

"Look out!—look out there!" cried one of the

Lochaber watchmen in Gaelic, and half-raising himself as he spoke.

"Look out!" cried one of the others laughing, "I'm thinking that I would need the blazing eyes of the devil himself to be able to look at any thing here."

"What's the matter?" shouted the sentinel at the door of the bothy; and as he said so, he halted in the midst of his walk, and bent his body forward in all directions in his eagerness to descry the cause of the alarm.

"Tut, nothing," replied another of the watchmen, "all's well, I warrant me."

"Aye, aye," said another, "we're safe enough from all surprise this night; for, as Archy says, it would need the fiery e'en of the red de'il himself to grope a way through the forest in such darkness as this."

"It's dark enough to confound an owl or a bat, indeed," said the watchman who first spoke, "but mine are eyes that can note a buck on Ben Nevis' side of an autumn morning, a good hour before the sun hath touched his storm-worn top; and, by St. Colm, I swear I saw some dark-looking thing glide over the lip of the bank yonder."

"It must have been a dark-looking thing, in-

deed, to have been visible there," replied his comrade; "but if it were not fancy, it must have been a fox or a badger."

"Be it what it might," replied the man, "I swear I saw the back of the creature as it came creeping over the round of the bank."

"What, think ye, makes the cattle rout so strangely?" demanded the sentinel.

"That which makes the pipes skirl so loudly," replied one of the men below, "a stomach full of wind. I promise you the poor beasts got but a scanty supper ere the sun went to. And here, unless they can eat gravel or sand in this hole, or heather as hard as pike-heads, they have little chance of filling their bellies with aught else but wind."

A noise of talking was now heard within the bothy, where all had been so quiet previously, and immediately afterwards the doorway was darkened by the figures of two or three men, who came crowding out to gaze ineffectually around them. Some talking took place between them and the sentinel; and Macfarlane and his people gave up all hope of the success of the manœuvres they had planned. But after some moments of most painful suspense, the talk of the Lochaber men termi-

nated in a loud laugh, produced, no doubt, by some waggish remark made against some individual of the little knot, after which the figures retired into the hut. The sentinel resumed his silent walk, and the watchmen in the hollow below seemed to relapse into their former state of slumber.

The silence that now prevailed was not less deep and intense than the darkness that sat upon this wild forest scene, where the plunderers lay unconsciously surrounded by their mortal foes. Macfarlane moved cautiously round the circle of his men, to assure himself that all were prepared, and sufficient time having now expired, to have allowed the slumber of security to have again crept over his victims, he took a matchlock from his henchman, and stepping forth from under the trees, he pointed it with a deliberate and unerring aim at the sentinel, as he stood for a moment directly opposed to the full light proceeding from the doorway. He gave fire.—This was the fatal signal—instantaneously fatal to him against whom the deadly tube was levelled, who sprang into the air and fell without a groan, pierced through the very heart. But it was not fatal to him alone; for ere

the report of the shot had re-echoed from the surrounding heights of the forest, or its myriads of feathered inhabitants had been roused by it on the startled wing, the dirks of the four Macfarlane herdsmen had bathed themselves in the life's-blood of the four Lochaber watchmen; so that their living slumbers were in one moment exchanged for those of death. The wild war-shout of "*Lochsloy!—Lochsloy!*" arose at once from every part of the ring of the Macfarlanes, who environed the place; and each man keeping his eyes on the light that issued from the bothy, on they ran towards it as to a centre from all parts of the circle. So sudden was the attack, that those within had hardly time to start from their sleep, and to hurry in confusion to the door, ere the Macfarlanes were upon them. The clash of arms was terrific, and the slaughter fearful. At once driven back in a mass, the remnant of the Lochaber men barricadoed the doorway in despair, and determining to die hard, they fired many shots from behind it, as well as from a small window hole near it; but discharged as these were from a crowded press of men, where no aim could be taken, no very fatal effect could be produced by them. On the other

hand, the assailants could do nothing, till Macfarlane kindled a slow-match, and prepared to thrust it into the dry heather that covered the roof.

"Macfarlane!" cried Angus, eagerly endeavouring to interpose; "for the love of the Virgin fire not the thatch!—Think of old Margery's vision!"

Macfarlane did think of it; but, alas! he thought of it too late; for the slow match had been already applied—had already caught fatally; and in one instant it had burst into a blaze, that, amidst the pitchy darkness of that night, would have been a magnificent spectacle, could any one have beheld it without those dreadful emotions naturally excited by the cruel cause that created it, and the horrible circumstances that attended it. In one moment more the whole of the wooden structure was in flames, and inconceivably short was the period in which the tragedy was consummated. Loud and piteous were the cries for mercy; but they fell on ears which revenge had rendered deaf to mercy's call. The half-burned Lochaber men, yelling like demons, rushed in desperation forth from the blazing walls; but dazzled by the glare, they only rushed to certain destruction on the spears of the

Macfarlanes, and were hewn down by their trenchant claymores, or despatched with their ready dirks; so that ere a few brief moments had fled away, all those who had been so recently reposing in fancied security, with the full pulses of robust life beating vigorously within their hardy frames, were heaped up in one reeking mass of carnage before the burning bothy.

"Let us rid the earth of these carcases!" said Macfarlane after a pause; for now that the keenness of revenge and the exciting eagerness of enterprise had been fully satiated by success, he was half horror-struck with the ghastly fruits of it, which he thus beheld piled up before him. In obedience to his command, the whole of the dead bodies were immediately gathered together, and thrown within the burning bothy, where they were quickly covered with branches and half-decayed pieces of wood, hastily dragged from the forest, till the fire that was thus created shot up far above the trees in one spiral pillar of flame, bearing on its capital a black smoke that poisoned the air with the heavy and sickening taint with which it was loaded.

The Macfarlanes stood for a while grouped in

front of it, in silent contemplation of its fitful changes; but its light shewed little of the flush of triumph on their sullen brows. Each man held dark communing with his own gloomy thoughts. Their chief, leaning on the deadly instrument which had given the fatal signal, looked on the scene with a cloud on his brow, not less dark than that of the murky smoke itself. Whatever his reflections were, there was a restless and uneasy expression on his countenance. He started—for a dreadful sound came crashing through the forest. It was like that which might well have announced the coming of the demon of destruction or the angel of vengeance; and before he could mutter the Ave-Maria which mechanically came to his lips, that hurricane which the careering rack of the clouds had been for some time unheededly announcing, came rushing upon them with the swiftness of lightning and with resistless force. In one moment the frail wooden walls of the bothy, already yielding to the influence of the combustion, were levelled with the ground; and some six or eight of the tallest pines which stood nearest to them behind, were laid across them with all their branches in one heap by the blast. Mac-

farlane and his men were driven down on their faces, and compelled to cling to the knoll on hands and knees, like flies to a mushroom top. So tremendous was the violence of the tempest, that they could not rise from their crouching position, nor even dare to lift up their heads without the certainty of being whirled off their feet, and dashed to atoms against the boles of the neighbouring trees. This furious fit of the elements endured not long; but when a sudden lull of nature did allow them to assume the erect position, how terrible!—how appalling was the scene they beheld!

The funeral pile which they had themselves kindled for the massacred men of Lochaber, now arose in one broad resistless tower of fire, crowned, as it were, with many a pointed pinnacle of flame, that appeared to pierce the very sky, lighting up every part of the surrounding elevations, nay, every little crevice in the rocks, and every tree, bush, or petty plant that grew upon their rugged surface. If the spectacle was grand before, it was now sublime beyond all imagination. But, alas! the Macfarlanes were occupied with other contemplations; for the huge fallen pines which had so much augmented the conflagration,

had formed a train of communication from the burning bothy to the thick forest immediately behind it; and the flames had spread so rapidly far and wide on every side, that already the whole of the surrounding circle of wood presented nearly one dense and lofty wall of fire through which there was hardly any door of escape left for them. For one instant, and for that one instant only, something like dismay appeared in Macfarlane's eye, as he first gazed around him, and then cast a glance full of anxious expression towards his faithful clansmen.

"Perhaps I might have shewn more mercy," half-muttered he to himself. "But if it be the will of Heaven to punish me, oh! why should these poor fellows suffer for the sin of their chief? My brave men," continued he aloud, "we cannot stand here. The air already grows hot and scanty.—Follow me, and let us try to burst through yonder point where the flames seem to burn thinnest.—Come on."

Followed by his people, Macfarlane rushed down the sloping face of the knoll, with the intention of cutting across the open space by the most direct line towards the spot he had indicated; but

they had not gone many steps ere the hurricane again came sweeping over the woods with all its former fury,—the enormous pines bent and groaned as if from the agony they were enduring,—the violence of the conflagration was increased tenfold. —the wall of fire by which they were environed was speedily closed in, so as to annihilate every lingering hope of escape,—and the Macfarlanes were compelled to throw themselves again flat on the ground, and to scramble down into the bottom of the hollow, to avoid being scorched up like moths by the fire which the uncertain whirlwind darted suddenly hither and thither in different directions, and to escape the risk of being snatched up into the air and launched amid the burning pines.

It had happened so far well for the sufferers, that the cattle, terrified by the shouts of the conflict, and still more by the first blaze of the bothy, had fled up the bank from the hollow, and, forgetting their fatigue, they had charged full tilt through the forest, routing and bellowing in that direction which led to their own Loch Lomond pastures, from which they had been so unwillingly driven. The small space towards the bottom of the hollow, therefore, was thus left entirely disencumbered of

them; so that when the Macfarlanes were forced down thither, they were enabled to gather around the shallow pool of water in the centre of the place. There they endeavoured to defend themselves against the flying embers, by rolling up their bodies tight in their plaids. But although they were rid of the cattle, they were not left as the only occupants of the spot; for the place was soon covered with swarms of mice, weasels, adders, frogs, toads, and all the minuter sorts of animals, like them, driven into the centre of the circle by the scorching heat of the devouring element that surrounded them. For now the flames raged fiercer than ever, and the dense canopy of smoke that covered the comparatively small space where they lay, was so pressed down upon them by the fury of the blast, that it appeared to shut out the very air; and they seemed to breathe nothing but fire, and burning dust and ashes. Their very lungs seemed to be igniting,—whilst at every temporary accession of the tempest, the half-consumed tops of the blazing pines were whirled among them like darts, inflicting grievous bruises and burns on many of them.

And now, as if to consummate their afflictions

and their miserable fate, the long, dry, and wiry heath that grew within the open space where they lay, was laid hold of by the fire; and the flames, running along the ground from all sides towards the centre, threatened them with instant, awful, and inevitable death. But one resource now remained; and to that they were not slow in resorting. They rolled themselves into the shallow pool, and wallowed together in a knot. They gasped like dying men, and their eye-balls glared and started from their sockets with the agony they endured; and in their utter despair they sucked the muddy water of the *lochan* in which they lay, to cool their burning mouths and throats. Macfarlane felt as if they had been already consigned to the purifying pains of that purgatory through which, as his religion told him, their guilty souls must pass. Their bewildered brains spun round, and strange and terrific shapes seemed to pass before their eyes. Some short ejaculations for mercy were breathed, but not a groan, nor a word, nor a sound of complaint, was permitted to escape from any one of their manly breasts, even although the pool, their last frail hope, was now fast drying up from the intensity of the heat.

After a complication of indescribable torments, which made the passing minutes seem like hours, the force of the hurricane suddenly slackened for a short time, and the thick surface of heath around them having been by this time burnt out, and the trees which grew upon the immediate confines of the circle having had their boughs and foliage consumed and their trunks prostrated, the open space within which they were enclosed grew wider in its limits, and consequently the air became more abundant and freer in its circulation; so that they began gradually to revive. By degrees they were enabled to raise themselves in a weak and half-suffocated state, from what was now reduced to little more than the mere mud of the pool. Then it was that their chief, though himself much overcome by the conjunction of his own bodily and mental sufferings, was roused to active exertion by that anxious desire to preserve his people, which now sprang up within him, to the utter extinguishment of all consideration for his own person. He was so faint, that it was with some difficulty he could ascend the knoll; but he hastened to climb it, that he might endeavour to discover from thence whether any hope was likely to arise for them. There

he found that the bothy, and the fuel and pine-trees that had been heaped upon it, had already sunk into a smoking hillock of red-hot ashes, from the smouldering surface of which the ghastly half-consumed skulls of his Lochaber foes were seen fearfully protruding themselves. The undaunted heart of Macfarlane quailed before a spectacle so unlooked for and so unwelcome at such a moment. He started back and shuddered as their blackened visages met his eye, grinning, as it were, with a horrible fiend-like expression of satisfaction at his present misery. He turned from the sight with disgust, not unmingled with remorse, and then sweeping his eyes around the now far-retreating circle of the burning forest, and reflecting on the imminent destruction which he and his clansmen had so recently escaped, and looking to the peril by which they were yet environed, he crossed himself,—threw his eyes upwards,—uttered an inward prayer of penitence and of thankfulness, and then he bravely prepared himself to take every advantage of whatever favourable circumstances might occur.

After scanning the blazing boundary all around with the most minute attention, Macfarlane thought

he could perceive one narrow blank in the continuity of the fiery wall. His knowledge of the forest enabled him to be immediately aware, that the blank was occasioned by a ravine, which he knew was but partially covered with wood, through which a stream found its way. He took his determination; and summoning his people around him, and pointing out this distant hope of escape, he called to them to follow him. With resolute countenances they immediately began to make their difficult and hazardous way over the torrid and smoking ground, among the red-hot trunks of the pine-trees which stood half-consumed—smouldering fallen logs—tall branchless masts, which still blazed like upright torches, and which were every moment falling around them, or those which had already fallen, or which had been broken over, hanging burning in an inclined position across their way—whilst they were, every now and then, tripped and thrown down by some unseen obstacle among the scorching embers; and ever and anon each returning gust of the hurricane whirled up around them an atmosphere of ignited dust and cinders, almost sufficient to have deprived them of the breath of life. But still, with their heads half-

muffled in their plaids, they persevered, till the increasing heat of the air they inhaled and of the ground they trod on, and the multiplication of the difficulties they had to encounter, would have been enough of themselves to have convinced them of their approach to the more active theatre of the conflagration, even if its fiery enclosure, and the groaning and crashing of the falling timber had not been but too manifestly before their eyes and loud in their ears.

The difficulties and dangers of their progress now became infinitely multiplied. Hitherto their endeavours to keep together had been tolerably successful; but now each individual could do no more than take care of himself, and every cloud of burning cinders that blew around them, produced a greater separation among them, till finally they became so dispersed, that when the chief reached the head of the narrow ravine, through which he had hoped that he might have led them in a body, he cleared the burning dust from his eyes, looked every where around him eagerly for his people, and, to his bitter mortification, he beheld no one but his trusty Angus, who, amidst all the obstacles and hazards through which they had

passed, had still contrived to stick close to his master. Old Margery's vision came across his mind, and, in the midst of the burning heats to which he was subjected, the blood ran cold to his heart. He cast his eyes down the trough of the ravine, over which clouds of flame and smoke were then rolling, and there, indeed, he did, at transient intervals, behold a handful of his clansmen toiling through the perilous passage. He shouted aloud to bid them stay; but the overwhelming roar of the whirlwind, combined with that of the combustion of the neighbouring trees, rendered his voice altogether powerless. Distressing doubts arose within him as to the fate of those who appeared to be amissing; but the rapid growth of the conflagration around him compelled him to shake off all such thoughts, and summoning up his sternest resolution, he rushed down into the ravine, with Angus at his back, as if he had been rushing to an assault under the spirit-stirring influence of the war-cry of the Macfarlanes. And few assaults indeed could have been so hazardous, for, ever and anon, huge burning pines were precipitated from the steeps above, so that even the water-course itself was in a great measure choked up by their hissing and

smoking ruins. But still Macfarlane fought his way onwards amidst burnings and bruises, many of them occasioned by his frequently looking round with anxious solicitude for the safety of his faithful follower: but, in spite of all these difficulties and perils, he had already made considerable progress down the ravine, when, in one instant, he was deprived of all sense by the sudden descent of an enormous pine, which he could neither avoid nor see.

When the chief recovered from his swoon, he found himself lying on his back, in a shallow part of the little stream, which there crept along between two great stony masses. He had been struck down by the spray and smaller branches of the upper boughs of the tree, which, fortunately for him, had rested across the great stones in such a manner as to form an arch over his body; and, as this arch naturally produced a rush of air under it, he was thus saved alike from being crushed to death and from suffocation. Raising himself on his hands and knees, he made his way out from under the burning boughs, and got up so stunned and battered, that some moments elapsed ere he quite recovered his recollection. Recent events

then crowded fast to his mind, and with these his anxiety for the safety of Angus recurred more strongly than ever. He called loudly and frequently on him by name, but the well known voice of his faithful follower came not in return. A lurid light was thrown down into the depth of the ravine by the conflagration which was spreading widely above. He moved anxiously around the tree, looking earnestly every where underneath the smoking branches, till at last the manly countenance of Angus Macfarlane met his eye. The forehead exhibited a fearful ghastly looking wound, and his body was lying so crushed down beneath the boughs that pressed upon it, as to take away all chance that a spark of life remained within it. With desperate strength and anguish of mind the chief drew his claymore, and hewed away the interposing branches, till he had so far relieved the body as to be able to draw it forth. He eagerly felt for the pulses of life, but they were for ever stilled.

"Alas, alas, my faithful Angus!" cried Macfarlane; "art thou gone for ever! Alas, thy fate was indeed too truly read! But I cannot leave thee to feed the devouring flames, or to be a banquet for the ravens when this awful burning shall

have passed away. Alas! I promised to provide for thy bridal, and now, since it hath pleased Heaven to dispose it otherwise, it shall not be said that thy chief permitted thee to lack funereal rites!"

With these words, Macfarlane stooped him down, and raised the body of Angus upon his shoulders. The way down the water-course was obstructed by the huge half-consumed trunks of the fallen pines, which lay in every direction across, resting irregularly on the large blocks of slippery stone, with their branches interwoven like hurdles. But Macfarlane, weakened as he was by the accumulated fatigue and suffering he had undergone, staggered on under his burden with an unsubdued spirit, determined to bear it so long as his limbs were able to sustain his own person. Inconceivable was the toil which he underwent, and many were the hair-breadth 'scapes which he made from instantaneous destruction. But still he persevered with undiminished courage, until his heroic exertions were at length rewarded by his reaching a spot of comparative safety, beyond the fiery barrier which had so long environed him. But here he only stopped to breathe for a moment, for, toil-spent, exhausted, and bruised, and faint as he was,

he was still compelled, by a regard for his own life, to urge onwards over the smoother ground which he now trod, with longer and less cautious strides. His way was illuminated for an immense distance before him, by the triumphant conflagration that came roaring after him, and it was still gaining fresh strength every succeeding moment from the furious aid it was receiving from the increasing hurricane.

As he bore his burden resolutely onwards, his uncertain path led him across a mossy patch of heath, where there were but few trees. There the lurid light of the conflagration, reflected as it was from the heavens, was sufficient to show him a white figure, advancing hastily towards him. It was a maiden's slender form—she came—she uttered one wild and piercing shriek, and then she sank down amid the long heath. Macfarlane laid the body of Angus upon a small hillock, and ran to her aid. It was Ellen. He flew to a rill hard by, and brought water in his bonnet. She still breathed, but, as he lifted her head on his knee, each succeeding inspiration became fainter and fainter, till her fair bosom ceased to heave, and her lovely features settled into the marble stillness

of death. Her frenzied efforts had been greater than her delicate frame could bear, and the severe mental shock which she received had suddenly expelled her pure spirit from its earthly tenement.

Macfarlane leant over her for a time, altogether absorbed in the intensity of those feelings to which human nature compelled him to yield. But it was not long till the increasing roar of the advancing conflagration, which was now fearfully extending the breadth of its line of march, roused him from his stupor. What could he now do? Was he to abandon both, or even one of the bodies of those, the memory of whom he so much cherished, in order to consult his own safety? or was he to peril his own life for the purpose of performing a pious but by no means an imperatively necessary duty? He hesitated for a moment—a transient and accidental gleam disclosed to him the honest countenance of Angus—his heart filled with many an old recollection—his lip quivered—his eyes became moist—he moved towards the hillock, where the body of Angus lay, and stooping down hastily, he raised it again to his right shoulder, and then, passing onwards, he put his left arm around the slim form of Ellen, and lifting it up, he laboured onwards

under the weight of both, with the long hair of the maiden sweeping over the tops of the purple heath as he went. Louder and louder came the roar of the conflagration behind him. He quickened his steps, toiling on every moment more and more breathlessly. But again the trees grew thicker as he advanced, and his way became more and more encumbered by their stems. The heat of the advancing flames now came more and more sensibly upon him, yet still he struggled on, firmly resolved not to relinquish either of his burdens till dire necessity should compel him to do so. The moment when this alternative was to arrive seemed to be fast approaching—nature was becoming exhausted—when his ears caught a shout, which he well knew must come from some of his own clansmen. Faint as he was, the chief was not slow in replying to it; and, to his great relief, he was soon joined by some of those from whom he had been separated during the earlier part of their dreadful and bewildering retreat. He was now speedily relieved of both his burdens, and the flagging spirits of all of them being in some degree restored by this meeting, they again pushed onwards with renewed exertions, and without a halt, for some miles,

during which they picked up several stragglers, whose bruised and blackened figures gave sufficient evidence of the dangers and difficulties they had passed through.

Worn out almost to death, this remnant of the Macfarlanes with difficulty climbed the gentle slope of a considerable eminence that lay in their way, and as they wound over the summit of it, where the trees grew somewhat thinly, Macfarlane, as he looked behind him, had at last the satisfaction to perceive that they had now gained so much on their pursuing enemy as to render them secure of a safe and easy retreat. Many, I trow, was the cross that was signed, and the broken thanksgiving that was uttered ere the chief and this fragment of his followers threw themselves down to rest a while, and to contemplate the awful scene of destruction from which they had so wonderfully escaped, of which their present commanding position gave them a full view.

The flames had now spread for miles in every direction over the thickest parts of the forest, rising over the crested ridges, and swelling elevations, and diving into the deepest valleys and hollows. It seemed like one great billowy sea of fire, agitated

as it was from time to time by the hurricane, which, as it approached its termination, came in gusts, violent in strength, but short in duration. As each of these successively swept over the blazing woods, its terrible roar was mingled with the fearful crash of thousands of gigantic pines, which were levelled like reeds before it. These, as they fell, tossed up myriads of mimic stars and meteors into the firmament, which, being surrounded by a zone of dense and inky clouds on its horizon, shone from within that circumference to its very centre, like one vast concave plate of red hot brass. The scene was enough to humble the proudest heart. The very deer were terrified into an unwonted degree of familiarity with man, for a herd of them that came sweeping over the brow of the eminence, flying in terror from the devouring flames, halted by them, and mingled with them, as if to claim protection from them. The dauntless heart of Macfarlane himself sank within him, as the whole desolating circumstances of this terrible night came crowding to his mind. It was wrung by a deep pang as he recalled the horrible spectacle of the massacred men of Lochaber—he wept like a child when he again looked on the inanimate bodies of

those whose appointed bridal-day must now become that of their funeral. He groaned deeply as he gathered from his people around him the sad fate of many of those who were not now to be seen among them—and when such thoughts as these could be so far subdued as to permit him to gaze on the red and resistlessly devouring element, which was so rapidly annihilating his forest, he pictured to himself the melancholy devastation it would produce over his wide domains, and the destruction it would occasion to his hunting grounds, —and already, in imagination, he beheld the sable livery of mourning that must soon be spread over his hitherto magnificent territory. And how well his anticipations were verified, we know from the fact; that ere many days went round, the whole of the forest, covering that country for above twenty-five miles in length, and of a breadth corresponding to that extent, was completely burned down, and the mosses which afterwards originated from it, and which still exist, are full of the embalmed witnesses of this terrible calamity.

COMPARATIVELY RECENT DESTRUCTION OF THE FORESTS.

AUTHOR.—Your legend, my dear Grant, is extremely valuable as matter of history. The preservation of the circumstances which fortuitously caused the destruction of one vast extent of forest, enables us easily to imagine those which may have contributed to the annihilation of all the rest.

GRANT.—Doubtless, it does.

AUTHOR.—It appears, that many of those tracts of woodland must have perished at periods much more recent than we should at first sight be led to suppose; and it now occurs to me, that I lately heard enough to convince me that this was the case with the forests covering the bare country you are now looking at. Both of you know enough of it to be aware that the upper part of Strathspey, far

beyond those distant hills, is somewhat about eight and twenty or thirty miles from Cawdor Castle; and you know that bare heaths, such as we see before us, now cover the whole of that stretch of country, with two exceptions; I mean that of the picturesque forest of Dulnan, immediately to the south of the Bridge of Carr, and that presented by the now almost exhausted forest of Dulsie, the remnants of which you may see behind us yonder to our right, running along the trough of the river Findhorn, and covering part of the hills to the north of it. In the whole of the space I have mentioned, these are the only fragments of woodland left to interrupt the dull monotony of the moors.

CLIFFORD.—I was over it all this very season. It is not very easy for me to conceive that it could have ever been wooded at all. 'Tis excellent grouse ground every bit of it. But, as to timber, if there be any, it is all buried beneath the heathery sod.

AUTHOR.—True. Yet a respectable man, perfectly worthy of credit, assured a friend of mine, that in his grandfather's younger days, the state of this part of the country was very different. The old man he alluded to lived near Aviemore. He

sent his son, who was the father of my friend's informant, on some errand to Fort-George. He had himself become blind from age, and as he had not travelled that way for many years, he earnestly questioned his son after his return. "What sort of a country is that you have been seeing?" said he; and when his son had described it as having pretty much the same appearance as it now wears, "Och, hey!" exclaimed the old man, "what a change!—When I was a youth, I used to go in underneath the shade of the forest on this side of the woods of Dulnan, and I hardly ever saw the sun again till I got out of it below Cawdor Castle!"

GRANT.—That is a very curious fact. Why, that would bring the existence of the forests of this part of the country down to within three generations; and, even allowing that your friend's informant was advanced in life when he told the story, and that his father and grandfather were rather patriarchal in the endurance of their lives, yet I think the evidence you have brought forward would enable us safely to say, that these moors we now look upon were still covered with wood at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

AUTHOR.—Such, certainly, ought to be our con-

clusion. Is it not surprising, then, that I have never been able to pick up any account, legendary or otherwise, of the circumstances which must have produced the extirpation of these forests at a period comparatively so recent.

CLIFFORD.—From the roots and trunks which are left, it would appear that the trees were almost entirely pines.

AUTHOR.—The pine is certainly the prevailing tree, but it is by no means the only one. Birches, alders, and hazels are common, and oaks of immense size, some of them three or four feet in diameter for a great way up the stem, are dug up in various parts of these moörs, and many of them in situations where it is now matter of astonishment that such monarchs of the wood could have been produced; for they are found high on the hills yonder above Dulsie, as well as in the mosses far up the courses of the rivers Dorback and Divie.

CLIFFORD, (*with enthusiasm.*)—With what a different scene should we now be surrounded, if we could conjure up all these ancient tenants of the soil, like the reanimated bodies of dead warriors from their graves, as told in some fairy tale of my childhood, to live again, and to wave their leafy

banners triumphantly over these hills and hollows!

GRANT.—It would be a very different scene indeed.

AUTHOR.—Aye, truly it would. Conceive the bleak face of these moors so covered, and then carry your imagination back into remote ages, and let us endeavour to people it in fancy with the animals which must have roamed through its endless wildernesses, and couched within the protection of its almost impervious thickets.

CLIFFORD.—What a country for sport!

AUTHOR.—Let us picture to ourselves the myriads of birds of all kinds which winged their flight over the boundless ocean of its foliage, as it was blown into billowy motion by the breezes, or which nestled among its branches as it quietly settled itself to repose, and we shall not only have produced out of these wastes a gorgeous landscape, most romantic in its character, but we shall have opened a wide field for the speculations of the naturalist.

CLIFFORD.—Yes; but, talking of the romantic character of your landscape, what would all that be to the ancient figures to be found in it?—Fancy, only fancy the figures!—Think of the dress, the arms,

the hunting-implements, and the houses of its human inhabitants!—Would we could have but one glimpse of them truly as they were!

AUTHOR.—If you were to go far enough back for them, you would fill our forests with a race of men, rude as the scenes in which they lived and roamed, and the whole sketch would be one for which we could hardly now find any really existing resemblance, save in the wilds of North America.

GRANT.—Your view of the matter is probably correct enough.

AUTHOR.—I believe it to be very correct; and, now I think of it, a discovery was made some eight or ten years ago, which would seem to bear evidence to the former existence of this ideal picture, in which we have been indulging. Some labourers, who were employed in digging in a moss on Lord Moray's estate of Brae-Moray, to our left there, found a curious bundle, which they took from under ten feet of a solid peat stratum. The bundle was about two feet long by one foot thick, and in form it very much resembled such a cloak-bag as you may have at times seen strapped behind a horseman's saddle. A careless inspection of it would

have led one to believe that it was covered with leather tanned with the hair on it, and it looked, for all the world, like that of one of those strange old trunks, which were frequently to be seen bristling like bears among the uncouth baggage on the top of our ancient *Flies* and *Diligences*. When I first saw it, a piece of it had been torn up by the curious peasants who had found it, and the aperture they had thus made enabled us to become instantly acquainted with the nature of the mass within, which proved to be tallow.

GRANT.—Tallow!—*Adipocere*, I suppose. That fatty substance into which animal fibre is frequently converted by long immersion in water.

AUTHOR.—No such thing, I assure you. It was pure tallow; and the whole appearances connected with it were very easily explained. It was evident that the tallow fresh taken from the recent carcase had been pressed into the raw hide the moment it had been stripped from the newly slain animal, and the whole had been stitched or rather laced up with thongs cut from the *skin itself*. The perfect state of the leather into which the skin had been converted, exhibited a beautiful proof of the extent to which the chemical prin-

ciple *tannin* exists in peat moss. No modern tan-pit could have performed the process more effectually. Nor were the preservative properties of moss less established by it; for the tallow was quite entire and uncorrupted, and perfectly inodorous and tasteless. On first inspection it presented a hard appearance, so much so indeed, that it might have been mistaken for chalk; but the moment heat was applied, it melted as readily as fresh tallow would have done.

CLIFFORD.—By your account of this strange mass, it might have been valuable for the candle-makers, if not for culinary purposes. Pray, what became of it?

AUTHOR.—The noble proprietor of the estate where it was found gave it me at my request; and with his permission I sent it to the museum of the Edinburgh University. But whilst it remained in my possession, I never could look at it without its bringing to my mind what we have so often read of in North American travels,—I mean the Indian practice of killing an elk, or a deer, or a buffalo,—bundling up the tallow of the creature in its raw hide with all manner of expedition, with the future purpose of making *pemmican* of it, and

so marching off with it on their shoulders, leaving the flesh to feed the wolves and the bears. And really I cannot divest myself of the conviction that the mass of tallow I have described belonged to a period of the history of this country, when the state of its inhabitants differed but little from that of those nomade North American tribes.

GRANT.—It certainly does appear to give no small degree of probability to your fancy.

CLIFFORD.—Nay, but might not some of your cattle-lifters of a much later date have performed all that you suppose your savages to have done?

AUTHOR.—The circumstance of the bundle being found beneath ten feet of solid moss, which had formed over it since the time it was left there, together with the various layers of trees found in the same bog, lying one over the other, would seem to forbid any such apparently modern explanation, and to throw back the period of its deposition to a very remote era indeed.

GRANT.—Undoubtedly; and the probability is, that the tallow was the produce of no vulgar beast, but rather that of some of the bisons or magnificent wild cattle of the ancient Caledonian forests.

AUTHOR.—Certainly. But I have since had

another lump of tallow sent me, which had all the evidences of a much more modern origin. It was found on the farm of Drumlochan, on the south side of the Findhorn, about a mile below Dulsie Bridge yonder; and it was covered by a little more than two feet of moss. Its form was very peculiar; for it was round one way and flat the other, like a North Wiltshire cheese, which it very much resembled in shape and size. It had indeed every appearance of having been pressed into a cheese shape, until it had become firm enough to be removed. It had no covering of any kind on it; and although in hardness and consistence it was quite like the matter of the other mass, yet it must strike every one that its form, and the comparatively small depth at which it was found, render it probable that its origin was much more recent. I sent it to the Museum of the Northern Institution at Inverness.

CLIFFORD.—Ah! I shall be right at last, I find. This surely may have been the work of some of these freebooters of whom I have heard you speak,—of some of those very *limmers*, for example, who, as you once told me, stole Mr. Russel's cattle.

AUTHOR.—Oh no. That story is much too modern even for this last mass of tallow.

GRANT,—Bravo! Have you a tale of cattle-stealing to tell also? Allons, let us have it. I have a fair right to demand it of you.

AUTHOR.—There is little in my tale; and I fear it will tell but tamely after yours. Besides, I have already given an abridgement of it in an early number of a well-known magazine. But as you may not have seen it, and as we are now in the very scene where part of its events took place, we may sit down under the lee of yonder large stone on the brow of the hill, and I shall there give you the particulars of it, whilst you are enjoying the prospect which that elevated position commands.

By the time we had reached the spot I had indicated, my friends were not sorry to rest a while, and I began as follows:—

MR. RUSSEL AND THE REAVER.

THE decided, though cruel measures which followed the defeat of Culloden, whilst they were sufficient to extinguish the hopes of the Highlanders who had so enthusiastically espoused the cause of Charles, were ill calculated to subdue their warlike spirits. They were driven, it is true, to seek shelter in those rocky and inaccessible fastnesses which their highest glens afforded them; but there, amidst the wildest and most solitary scenes of nature, they permitted their minds to brood in bitter reflection over all their wrongs—over all those tragedies which history itself has blushed to record, —their wives and children massacred amidst the midnight conflagration of their humble dwellings, or perishing in their flight through the snows of

winter. But heroism such as theirs was not to be crushed even by such calamities as these,—calamities which were calculated to have bowed down less lofty and indomitable spirits to the very dust. With them the effect was like that which would result from some puerile attempt to curb and arrest the mountain cataract. They were divided, as its stream might be, into smaller and less important bodies, and their power was no longer so forcible as when they were united together in one stream, but each individual portion seemed to gain a particular character and consequence of its own, by its separation from the main body, where it had hitherto flowed undistinguished and unobserved.

It was thus that lurking in little parties, in retreats only known to themselves, among craggy ravines and pine-clad precipices, they now resumed that minor and predatory warfare which they had been wont to wage against the inhabitants of the more civilized parts of Scotland,—I mean that which consisted in plundering those richer districts of their cattle. Perhaps no inconsiderable degree of political animosity may have mingled itself in many instances, with the other motives that prompted these marauding expeditions in the

later times of which I am speaking. But, be this as it may, we must not look upon those who were engaged in them as we do upon the wretched cow-stealers of the present day. That which is now considered as one of the most despicable of crimes, was then, in the eyes of the mountaineer, esteemed as an honourable and chivalrous profession. In his untamed imagination, no one was looked upon with so much admiration and envy as that individual who might be chosen as the leader of a daring band to harry the low country of its live stock; for these proud sons of the Gael had ever held the inhabitants of the plains in the most sovereign contempt, and they regarded them and their more favoured pastures in no other light than as so many nurses and nurseries, destined by Heaven to rear the cattle which they were born to consume. I can instance one well authenticated example, which displays this opinion in its true light. The Laird of Grant, the great chieftain of the glen of Urquhart, having had his cattle driven off by a party of Camerons, and having sent a strong remonstrance to Cameron of Lochiel himself by a special ambassador, had his herds immediately restored to him, with a most courteous letter of apology, which, I believe, still exists, assuring him

that his stupid fellows had entirely mistaken his orders, which were, that they should not begin to plunder until they had reached "*Moray-land, where every gentleman was entitled to take his prey.*"

It was soon after the middle of the last century, that Mr. Russel, a gentleman of Morayshire, who resided at Earlsmill, near Tarnaway Castle, to the north of the Findhorn, and about ten miles from hence, was alarmed one morning by the unpleasant intelligence, that a strong body of Highlanders had come before day-break and carried off the whole of his cattle from this very farm of the Aitnoch, which he had at that time taken as a hill-grazing. Mr. Russel was an extremely active and intelligent man; and although he did not make all the warlike preparations which your friend the Laird of Macfarlane did, yet he was not deficient either in promptitude of decision or in readiness of action. After putting a few questions to the scared and breathless messenger, he lost not a moment in summoning and arming his servants; and, instead of taking this way—towards the Aitnoch, he struck at once diagonally across the country in a westerly direction, and marched with great expedition, in

order, if possible, to reach a part of the deep glen of the Findhorn, some miles above Dulsie yonder, in such time as to enable him to intercept the plunderers. You may trace with your eye the dark shadow of the glen, which sinks deep and abruptly into the bosom of those purple mountains which you see retreating behind each other in misty perspective. That is the grand pass into the Western Highlands. and Mr. Russel was well aware that if he did not succeed in arresting his cattle before the robbers had made their way through it, the boundless wastes to which it led would render all farther search after them quite hopeless. Having reached the course of the river, Mr. Russel and his party made their way down the steep hill-side, forded the stream to its southern bank, and carefully examining the ground, to ascertain whether any fresh foot-prints were to be observed, they took their stand, satisfied that they had been so far successful.

The spot chosen by Mr. Russel for his ambuscade was in the midst of that most beautiful range of retired and tranquil scenery known by the name of *The Streens*. There the hollow glen is so profound and so narrow in many places, that one of

those little clusters of cottages, which are now found here and there sprinkled in the pastoral bottom, has the name of *Tchirfogrein*, a Gaelic appellation, implying that it never sees the sun. There were then no houses near the place they had selected, but the party lay concealed behind some huge fragments of rock, shivered by the wedging ice of the previous winter from the summit of a lofty crag, that hung half across the narrow holm where they had taken up their position. A little farther down the river the passage was contracted, and there was no approach from that point but by a rude and scrambling foot-path irregularly worn along the steep face of the mountain, and behind them the glen was equally confined. Both extremities of the small amphitheatre thus enclosed, were then, though they are not now, shaded by dense thickets of birch, hazel, and holly, whilst a few wild pines found a scanty subsistence for their roots on the face of the crags in midway air, and were twisted and writhed, by lack of nutriment, into the most fantastic and picturesque forms. The stillness of an unusually calm and breathless air hung over this romantic scene, and it was lighted by the now declining sun of a serene summer day,

so that half the narrow haugh was in broad and deep shadow, that was strongly contrasted with the brilliant golden light falling on the tufted tops of the trees of a wooded bank on the opposite side of the river.

Mr. Russel and his small party had not long occupied their post, when, as they listened in the silence of the evening, they heard the distant lowing of the cattle, and the wild shouts of the reavers, as they came faint and prolonged up the hollow trough of the glen. The sounds gradually drew nearer and nearer, and increased in volume as they were swelled and re-echoed from the rocks on either side. At length the crashing of the boughs announced the appearance of the more advanced part of the drove; and the tired animals began to issue slowly from among the tangled wood, or to rush violently forth as the shouts of their drivers were more or less impetuous, or their blows chanced to light upon them. As they appeared individually, they gathered themselves into a group on the level open sward, where they stood bellowing, as if quite unwilling to proceed any farther.

In rear of the last stragglers of the herd, Mr. Russel now beheld bursting singly from different

parts of the brake, a party of fourteen Highlanders, all in the full costume of the mountains, and wearing the well-known tartan of a western clan. All of them were armed with the dirk, pistol, and claymore, and the greater number of them carried antique fowling-pieces. Mr. Russel's party consisted of not more than ten or eleven persons; but they were well armed, and they were people upon whom he could depend. Exhorting them to be firm, therefore, he drew them suddenly forth from their ambush, and ranged them up in array upon the green turf. The robbers appeared to be confounded for a moment, and uttered some uncouth exclamations of surprise; but a shrill whistle from their leader made them quickly recover their presence of mind; and they rushed forward in a body, and formed themselves in order of battle in front of their spoil. Mr. Russel and his party stood their ground with determination, whilst the leader of the enemy seemed to be holding council with himself as to what he should do. He was a little spare athletic man, with long red hair curling over his shoulders, and with a pale and thin, but acute visage. After leaning upon his gun for a time, and surveying the party opposed to him with the

eye of a hawk, he shouldered his piece and advanced slowly a few paces in front of his men, until he considered himself to be sufficiently within ear-shot, and, raising his voice,—

"Mr. Russel," cried he, in very correct English, though with a Highland accent, "are you for peace or war? If for war, look to yourself. But if you are for peace and treaty, order your men to stand fast, and let you and me advance and meet each other half way."

"I will treat," replied Mr. Russel; "but can I trust to your keeping faith?"

"Trust!" exclaimed the other in an offended tone, and with an imperious air, "methinks you may well enough trust to the word and honour of a gentleman!"

"I am content," said Mr. Russel.

The respective parties were now ordered to stand their ground, and the two leaders advanced about seventy or eighty paces each towards the middle of the open space, with their loaded guns cocked and presented at each other; and having abridged the distance that divided them to some ten or twelve paces, they halted, and the negociation commenced. A certain sum was demanded

for the restitution of the cattle. Mr. Russel had not so much money about him; but he offered to give all he had in his pocket, which amounted to a sum not a great deal short of what the robber had asked. After some little conversation this was accepted. The bargain was concluded—the money was paid—the guns were uncocked and shouldered—and the two hitherto hostile parties advanced to meet each other and to mingle together in perfect harmony.

"And now, Mr. Russel," said the leader of the band, "you must look at your beasts, to see that none of them are wanting."

"They are all here but one small dun quey," said Mr. Russel, after a minute examination of the herd.

"Ha!" cried the Highland leader, darting an angry glance of inquiry around his men, "how is this?—Ewan, I would speak with you."

A tall handsome dark man, whom he had thus addressed, then moved a little way apart with him, and a conversation ensued between them in Gaelic, the sound of which could only be heard, whilst ever and anon the leader's eyes glanced towards one or other of his people; and his voice and ges-

tures indicated anything but satisfaction. At last he returned towards the group.

"Mr. Russel," said he, "you may make your mind easy about the dun quey. On the word of a gentleman, she shall be on your pasture before day-light to-morrow morning."

The treaty being thus happily concluded, and the cattle taken possession of by those who were wont to have the charge of them, Mr. Russel and the Highland leader shook hands and parted, and each took his own way attended by his followers.

CLIFFORD (*interrupting the narrative*). Ah! I have a shrewd suspicion that the cheese-shaped lump of tallow you spoke of will turn out, after all, to have been the produce of poor Dunny.

AUTHOR.—Have patience, and you shall hear.

We shall leave Mr. Russel and his people to return down the glen with the rescued herd, that we may enquire a little into the motions of the reaver and his men. They had no sooner threaded the mazes of the brake which shut in the upper end of the dell that was the scene of the strange negociation I have described, than the leader halted them, in order to hold a conference.

"Ewan," said he to him who seemed to act as his second in command, "this is an awkward affair, and you have been much to blame. You had charge of the rear, and not a beast should have strayed. But your carelessness has brought my honour into pledge; and, by all that is good, you must redeem it. I have said that the dun quey shall be on Mr. Russel's pasture in the morning; and, dead or alive, she must be there; for a gentleman's word must be kept."

"I own I have not been so sharp as I should have been," said Ewan, with a mortified air; "but I think I have enough of cleverness in me to enable me to promise *you*, on the word of a gentleman, that *your* word shall be made good."

"See that it be so, then," said the leader, somewhat sternly, as he walked slowly away up the glen. "Take what strength you please with you, but see that you save both my honour and your own."

His comrades crowded around Ewan, proffering him their friendly aid to enable him to search for and recover the quey. But he courteously declined all their kind offers; and tightening his plaid over his body with the utmost composure, he

sprang up the almost perpendicular face of the southern mountain with the agility of a deer, and disappeared over the brow of it, without permitting his breath to come much quicker there than it had done whilst he was in talk with his companions in the deep glen below.

Ewan wandered not over the moors and mosses which you see stretching over the mountain far off yonder, like one who was bewildered, or like a hound at fault. Circumstances had arisen to his mind, which had afforded him some clue to the search he had undertaken; and of that clue he had at once laid hold, with a determined resolution to unravel it as speedily as possible to the end. His course, therefore, was taken at once; and it was a most direct one. You see that singular opening in the country between us and Strathspey? Perhaps you may remember that there is a narrow pass there, where a small lake fills the bottom of the defile, and where the face of the mountain that rises over it has all the appearance of having been shaven down by the sword of some giant. The strange tradition of the country indeed is, that it was done by the mighty Fingal, by way of trying the temper of a claymore which

he had not yet put to the proof. Well does the weapon seem to have performed its office; and in honour of it the place has ever since been called *Beemachlai*, or the cut of the sword. Ewan then had no sooner breasted the mountain that hung over the Findhorn, than he turned his face directly southward, and took his way in a straight line for the pass; and despite of the ravines and burns, and peat-pots, and moss-hags, and all the other difficulties and obstructions that lay in his road; and the darkness of the evening which settled down upon that wild hill to make all these difficulties ten times greater than they otherwise would have been; he, in a wonderfully short period of time, found himself planted in the narrow path that ran between the loch of Beemachlai, on the one hand, and the mountain that rises from its western margin on the other.

But before taking up his post, the cautious Ewan stooped down, and carefully passed his hand over the whole surface of a bare spot, of some dozen or so of square yards in extent, which he knew must necessarily have been crossed by every man or beast travelling that way, to ascertain whether any fresh foot-prints had been made

in the soft black surface of the moss. His experience in such investigations was so great as to enable him perfectly to satisfy himself that no animal at least had recently trodden there; and with this assurance he stationed himself in the very hollow of the pass, and, seated on a bank, he turned his head towards the north, whence the path came downwards along the base of the hill, and kept eager watch both with eyes and ears. The moon was at this time but young, and the sky was partially covered with thin fleecy clouds; so that when it did rise, it gave but a scanty and uncertain light, though it was enough to pourtray the bold profile of Fingal's hill on the calm bosom of the lake, as well as to enable any one to distinguish a human figure at some little distance.

Ewan had not remained long in this position, when he distinctly heard the short sharp cry used by Highlanders for urging on a bullock. It was occasionally repeated: and by and bye it was followed by the faint sound of the footsteps of a beast and its driver, which grew upon his ear. Ewan bent his head towards the ground, that he might the better catch the figures of both against the sky; and ere they had already come within fifty

yards of him, he rubbed his hands together with satisfaction to find that his judgment had not deceived him, and starting up to his feet, he planted himself directly in the middle of the path, so that his figure threw a broad shadow across it; and leaning on his gun, he calmly waited the advance of him who came. He was a tall—nay, almost a gigantic man, with an awkward shambling gait; and he held the dun quey by a long halter with his left hand, whilst he drove her on with a huge rough stick which he carried in his right. He halted the moment that Ewan's dark figure appeared.

"What is it that stands there?—Answer, in the name of God!" cried he, in Gaelic, and in a tone that manifested great alarm.

"Methinks a foul thief like you had little ado with any such name, Gilliesh," replied Ewan resolutely.—"What devil tempted you to steal the dun quey from our herd?"

"What devil told you that I had stolen her?" demanded Gilliesh, much relieved to find that he had to deal with nothing more than mortal flesh.

"Did I not see thee lurking among the birches on the Doun of Dulsie?" said Ewan; "and did I

not know that thou couldst be there for no good end,—and when the quey was missed, did I not put that and that together to help my guessing, and have I not guessed rightly?"

"What an you have?" replied Gilliesh; "'tis but a poor prize I have gotten after all, and hardly worth your tramping so far for. You had surely enough, without grudging me this bit dwining beast."

"Such base thievery cannot be suffered," said Ewan,—"besides, I have reasons of my own for what I do. Come away, then, and give me the rope; and bless your stars that you escape, for this time at least, being hanged by one. The beast must back with me, and you may take your own way home to Dulnan side at your leisure; and thank your good fortune that you get there in a whole skin."

"Well may you speak so bold indeed," said Gilliesh bitterly, "with that big black gun in your hand, ready to bring me down in a moment like a muir-cock off a hillock. But by the great oath, ye would crack less crouse if ye stood there before me with nothing but your claymore by your side."

"Ye lie, ye thieving vagabond," cried Ewan, "I'll

stand at all times before you or a better man with this good sword alone. See here,—my gun shall rest against this rock; and on the word and honour of a gentleman, I'll never touch stock or lock of it till I shall have chastised thee to thy heart's content, if thou wilt so have it."

"Be it so," said the crafty Gilliesh; "and I'll tether the quey to this moss-fir stump here, and let her stand by to see the stoure, and to be the prize of him who may prove himself to be the better man."

It would have been a sight of some interest to have watched the preparations for this very extraordinary single combat. On the part of Ewan they consisted merely in his placing his gun against the rock with great tranquillity and with great care, and then drawing his claymore from its scabbard, and twisting the folds of his plaid tightly over his left arm, ere he put himself into the proper position for action. As for Gilliesh, he had no sooner tied the end of the quey's halter to the moss-fir stump, than he drew a broadsword of a magnitude so tremendous, as well corresponded with his almost Philistian height. The bare, flat, mossy, piece of ground already noticed, was the arena on

which they were to contend; and if it was free from prints of any kind when Ewan examined it a brief space before, it was now destined ere long to have enow of them impressed upon it by the coming struggle. Aware of the great advantage which Gilliesh had over him from his superior height, and still more from the greater sweep of his arm and sword, Ewan approached his adversary very cautiously at first. On the other hand, numerous, and rash, and awkward, were the cuts and the thrusts which Gilliesh attempted to make; but they were given with a force and a fury that rendered it necessary for Ewan to use all the skill of which he was master, to enable him to dodge and to parry them. Now and then their blades came into fearful contact; and when they did so, the shearing of them together produced a sheet of flame that gave a temporary illumination to the deep shadow which a projecting bank threw over that part of the lake immediately below. As their desperate play went on, the clashing of the glowing steel struck terror into the timid animal that had occasioned the fight; and the powerful efforts which her fear impelled her to make, having at last burst her tether from its fastening, she fled away

beyond hearing of the fray. Meanwhile, the combat continued to rage, and as it went on, the combatants gradually shifted their ground until they had changed places. On the part of Gilliesh this was not done without its intention; for no sooner did he find himself within reach of Ewan's gun, than he seized it up, and presented it without scruple at its owner, and without one shadow of remorse drew the trigger. But the hammer fell harmless into the empty pan. Ewan sprang upon him in a moment, and ere he could recover the use of his sword, he gave him one desperate cut across the temple, that brought him to the earth with his face bathed in blood.

"Villain!" cried Ewan, as he stood over his prostrate foe with the point of his sword at his throat. "Traitor that thou art, wouldst thou have been a murderer as well as a thief? Had not a stray stag crossed me at a distance as I came over the hill, and tempted me to take an idle chance shot in the twilight, when my haste would not allow me to load again, I should have been at this moment stretched out a corpse by thy treachery."

"Spare my life!" cried the wretch, piteously.

"Spare thy life," replied Ewan contemptuously, as he quietly picked up his gun, and proceeded to load it; "I have no mind that thy worthless and cowardly life should stain this good sword of mine with dishonour, nor do I choose that it should be the means of cheating the gallows of what so justly belongs to it. Gather thyself up, then, as thou mayest, and take thy way to Dulnan side; for, by all that is good, if thou dost shew thine ugly visage again to me, like a grim ghost on the moor, I'll not miss thy big body as I did that of the stray stag, but I'll open a door in it wide enough to allow thy rascally soul to issue forth and to join its kindred malignant spirits of the swamp and the fen."

With these words Ewan threw his gun over his shoulder, and set out in search of the stray heifer. It was some time before he found her, and a still longer time after he had found her before he caught her; and after he had caught her, it was but the commencement of a most toilsome night with her, ere he could compel her, tired as she was, to travel through bog and mire to the place of her destination. But be this as it may, Ewan saw that the reaver's word was made good,—next

morning the dun quey was seen grazing with the rest of the herd on the farm of the Aitnoch. Nobody could tell how she came there; but the eagerness with which she plucked at the pasture, and her jaded and draggled appearance, afforded sufficient evidence of the length and nature of the night journey she had been compelled to perform.

It was not very long after this that Mr. Russel happened accidentally to have ridden up to his farm here one morning, and, as he was engaged in moving about looking at his stock, his attention was attracted by a long drove of cattle, which he observed straggling up yonder opposite bank of the Dorback branch of the river Divie, to the eastward there, evidently with the intention of crossing at a ford a little way above. At first sight there appeared to be little remarkable in this, for he well knew that to be a common track, travelled by all whose route lay through this country, stretching up the south side of the Findhorn. But the drovers and their herd had no sooner passed the Dorback, and gained its western bank, and begun to advance in a direction pointing towards the course of the Findhorn, than Mr. Russel recognised the same Highland party and the same bold leader, from

whom he had so recently recovered his own cattle. Some of the men who were about him were led, from certain circumstances, to know that the drove of beasts which they now saw had been carried off from Gordonston, the seat of Sir Robert Gordon, about thirty miles distant in the *Laigh of Moray*. Mr. Russel was in habits of friendship with Sir Robert, and he quickly came to the resolution that he should allow no such hostile and predatory act to be done to him if he could help it, and above all that he should not facilitate it by permitting a passage for the robbers and their booty through his territory. He was here not only in the midst of his own people, but he was, moreover, in the very centre of Lord Moray's estate of Brae-Moray, of which he had the entire management, and accordingly he resolved to avail himself of these circumstances, and he determined immediately to arrest them. With this intention he hastily collected all the dependants who were within his reach, and, before the robbers came up with their booty, he found himself at the head of double their number of well-armed men.

When the party arrived within hearing, Mr. Russel hailed the leader, and at once plainly told

him that he could not stand by and suffer the cattle of his friend Sir Robert Gordon to be thus harried, far less could he tamely permit them to be thus driven through his farm. He therefore called upon the robber to halt, assuring him that if he offered to advance with his party, or to persist in driving the cattle one step farther, it should be at his own peril, and he must take the consequences; for that nothing but force should compel him to give them way.

"Mr. Russel!" cried the leader, stepping before the rest with a haughty air; "this is not what I expected from you, after what has already passed between us. You stopped and recovered your own beasts, and nobody could blame you; but, sir, it is not like a gentleman to offer to hinder me from taking cattle from anybody else."

"My principles are very different," said Mr. Russel, with great coolness.

"I tell you again," cried the little man; "that you will be acting unjustly if you persevere, and that you have no right to do so."

"I am determined to persevere, notwithstanding," said Mr. Russel, with great strength of emphasis and firmness of expression.

"Then, sir, I must caution you that you had better take care what you do," said the Highlander.

"I am prepared for all consequences," said Mr. Russel.

"Well, well, sir," said the Highlander frowning, "we cannot help it; you are in your own kingdom here, and you must have your own way; but, I bid you take heed—you'll rue this yet—look well to yourself."—So saying, he called to his followers in Gaelic, who, with much apparent dissatisfaction, abandoned the cattle, and the whole party took the road to the hills, muttering dark threats and half-smothered imprecations against Mr. Russel.

These denunciations were little heeded, and were probably soon forgotten by him against whom they were uttered, or if they were remembered at all it was only to produce greater vigilance on the part of those who had the charge of his stock. But, it so happened, that during the course of the ensuing winter, some express business, connected with his charge of Lord Moray's affairs, carried Mr. Russel to Edinburgh. When he was on his return homewards, he arrived late one stormy and tempestuous night at the solitary inn of Dalnacaerdoch, situated.

as every body knows, at the southern extremity of that part of the great Highland road leading through the savage pass of Drumouachter. Seeing that it was quite hopeless to think of prosecuting his journey that night in such weather, he took a hasty supper, and went to bed, with the resolution of rising as early next day as the lack of light at that season would permit.

He was accordingly up in the morning, and in the saddle before he could well see his horse's ears, and he set out through the snow for the inn of Dalwhinnie, situated at the northern end of the pass, attended only by a single servant. He had not proceeded far into the wild and savage part of that solitary scene, where high poles, painted black, are erected along the edge of the road, to serve as beacons during winter, to prevent travellers from deviating from the road and being engulphed in the snow-wreathes, when, by the light of the dawn, he descried a man, at some two or three hundred yards' distance, who came riding towards him. As he came onwards, Mr. Russel had time to remark that he exhibited a thin spare figure, which was enveloped in a long dark-brown cloak or great-coat. He rode one of the loose made

garrons of the country, of a dirty mouse colour, having no saddle, and no other bridle than a halter made of small birchen twigs, twisted into a sort of rope, called by the common people a *woodie*. In spite of himself, the recollection of the Highland reaver and his angry threats darted across Mr. Russel's mind; and he was somewhat alarmed at first, when he observed that he who approached, carried in his hand, poised by the middle, a very long fowling-piece, of that ancient character and description which gave our ancestors excellent hope of killing a wild-duck sitting in the water half way across a lake of half a mile broad. Mr. Russel instinctively pulled out his pistols and examined their locks, and he made his servant do the same by his; but the inequality of such weapons, compared with that which I have this moment described, was only thereby rendered the more wofully apparent to both of them. Mr. Russel rode slowly but resolutely on however, with his eyes intently watching every motion of him who came, and who was now drawing nearer and nearer to them. The stranger himself seemed to advance cautiously, but no sooner had he come close enough to enable him to recognise a human countenance, than he

pushed up his shying steed by the application of ardent and repeated kicks; and, when he had at length succeeded in compelling him forward, to Mr. Russel's no inconsiderable relief he recognised in him—the landlord of the inn of Dalwhinnie!

"Keep us a', I'm glad I ha'e forgathered wi' ye in time, Mr. Russel!" he exclaimed in a south country tone and dialect, and without waiting for the ordinary preliminary salutations.

"Why, what's the matter?" demanded Mr. Russel.

"Matter!" replied the man; "a matter o' murder, gif I'm no far mistane."

"Mercy on me! Who has been murdered?" cried Mr. Russel.

"I didna' say that ony body was murdered," answered the man; "but, an ye persevere on your road through the pass, I'm thinkin' that somebody will be murdered."

"What makes you fancy so?" asked Mr. Russel.

"Were ye no to hae been at my hoose last night?" demanded the Dalwhinnie landlord.

"I did so intend," said Mr. Russel; "but the road turned out to be so much heavier than I had

anticipated, that all I could do was to reach Dalnacaerdoch, and that at a late hour."

"It was the yespecial providence o' Heevin that you didna' get forrit," said the landlord, throwing up his eyes as if in thanksgiving, "for, if you had, you would have been assuredly a cauld corp at this precious moment."

"A corpse!" exclaimed Mr. Russel; "what has put that into your head?"

"Troth, as sure as ye are noo sittin' on your horse," replied the landlord, "ye wad ha'e been murdered, though you had had mair lives nor a cat."

"Explain yourself, I entreat you!" said Mr. Russel.

"It's an awfu' story," said the landlord, shuddering at the mere recollection of it. "It was at the dead hour o' the night, ye see, whan we war a' sound sleepin' in our beds, we war a' alarumed wi' a sudden noise and rissellin' in the yard, an' afore we kent whar we wuz, the hoose was filled wi' better nor twa dizzen o' great muckle armed hillan'men, wi' blackit faces. Aweel! they lighted great big lunts o' moss-fir at the kitchen fire, and cam' straught to my bed-side, brandishin' their

pistols and durks, and lookin' as if they wad eat me up.—'Whar's Mr. Russel sleepin'?' cries they. —'Gentlemen,' says I, 'as sure as death, Mr. Russel's no in this hoose.'—'We ken better,' says they; 'we ken he was to be here this night.'—'Some mistak, gentlemen,' says I; 'I'm dootin' that ye maun ha'e made some mistak: for Mr. Russel's not only no here, but, an' ye'll believe me, troth I didna' even expeck him.'—A' this only made them waur. They threatent and swoore at me like very rampawgin deevils,—and then they begud to search ilka hole and bore and cranny and corner in the hoose; an' no contented wi' the hoose, they rummaged a' the oot hooses, lookin' even into places whaur it was just simply impossible that a very cat could ha'e concealed hersel', an' forcin' me alang wi' them a' the time, half naked, an' near hale dead wi' fear. And syne, whan they could find neither you nor your horses, preserve us a' what a furious hillant yell they did set up!—they war just a'thegither mad wi' rage and disappointment; an' some o' them war for burnin' the very hoose, that they might mak' sure that ye warna' lurkin' somewhere aboot it after a'. At length, a stiff, stern wee body, wha

seemed to be their captain, seelenced them in a moment; and having spoken to them for some time in Gaelic, their violence was moderated, or rather it seemed to be converted into downright hunger and drouth, for they begud to look for bread and cheese, and ither eatables, and whisky, for themsel's. Weel I wot, I gied them what they wanted wi' gude heart and wull, houpin' to get the sooner quite o' them; and little payment, I trow, did I expeck for my cheer. But, what think ye, sir? As I'm a sinner, they honestly paid me every farden o' their shot afore they ga'ed awa."

"Have you any notion as to whither they went after they left your house?" demanded Mr. Russel.

"Some o' our herds war sayin' that their tracks i' the snaw lay towards Loch Ericht," replied the landlord; "and, gif so be the case, I'se warrant that they have darned themsel's in some o' the queer hidy-holes aboot the craigs there awa'. And, I'll be bailed, they'll be ready to come back again or e'er ye ken whaur ye are, to murder you clean oot o' hand, for surely they maun contrive somehoo' or ither to ha'e gude information."

"It is certainly most strange how they could

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have known so well what my plans were," said Mr. Russel.

"Troth, sir, they're just deevils incarnate," continued the landlord; "but ye maun on no account think o' gaein' on, Mr. Russel; for, gif ye do, ye gang to certain death. Gae ye yere ways back to Blair or Dunkeld, for I'm dootin' ye'll no be safe nae gate else, and I'll send ower into Morayshire for some o' your ain fouk, weel accoutred and furnished, to convoy ye safe hame."

Mr. Russel was no coward, but he well knew the nature of the Highlanders he had to deal with. And what could the pistols of two men do against two dozen of well-armed assassins, springing on them at unawares by the way, or attacking them in their beds? After some little consideration, therefore, he deemed it most prudent to take the landlord's advice; and, accordingly, after he had thanked the honest fellow for the zeal he had manifested for his safety, and after the landlord had looked suspiciously around him and scanned the faces of the hills to their very tops with strong signs of apprehension, earnestly praying to God that their interview might not have been overlooked and

watched by any of the robbers or their spies—they parted; and Mr. Russel and his servant retraced their steps at a good round pace.

After nearly a week's delay at Dunkeld, Mr. Russel was enabled to renew his journey at the head of a well armed party of between thirty and forty of his own people, who came to escort him. They travelled along with great caution, but they did not perceive the smallest show of hostility till they got into the middle of the pass of Drumouachter. Then, indeed, they observed that they were reconnoitred from the rough face of one of the hills overhanging the road, by a body of more than twenty armed mountaineers. They seemed to have issued from the recesses of one of those *Corries* or ravines, which there yawn over the valley like gashes on the lofty brow of a warrior; and after some minutes apparently spent in consultation, they began to move along the steep acclivity in a line parallel to the road which Mr. Russel pursued. Their dark tartans waved in the wind, and their figures were boldly relieved against the glazed and brilliant surface of the snow they trod on. A certain degree of hesitation seemed to mark all their movements, which appeared to have a manifest reference to those of the party below. Mr.

Russel marched on with a steady and resolute pace, his men keeping a sharp look out in all directions, and being perfectly prepared to resist any sudden attack. But the mountaineers, being conscious of an inferiority of strength which rendered any open attempt on their part quite hopeless, did not venture to assault so large and so well armed a band. After skirting along the hill sides for five or six miles, they seemed gradually to slacken their pace till the whole body came to a halt on a prominent point of the mountain, where they remained, following Mr. Russel and his people with their eyes, and probably with their curses also, so long as they remained within sight. Mr. Russel thought it prudent to halt but for a short time at Dalwhinnie; and well was it for him that he did not tarry there all that night, for the house was again surrounded and searched by an overwhelming force, whilst Mr. Russel was urging his way homewards with an expedition that enabled him to reach his residence in perfect safety.

Whether a natural or accidental death, or some other cause, put an end to any farther attempts on the part of the vindictive mountaineer, I know not; but certain it is, that Mr. Russel was never more troubled either by him or by his people.

SCENERY OF THE FINDHORN.

CLIFFORD.—In justice to your story, I must say that it is much more interesting than the scene where it was enacted, if we may judge from the specimen at this moment before us.

GRANT.—Nay, but take the trouble to carry your eyes entirely over the foreground, and behold the sun gleaming afar off yonder on the broad sheet of the Moray Firth, with those bold dark headlands called the Sutors defending the entrance of the Bay of Cromarty beyond, backed by the blue mountains of Ross-shire and Sutherland in the distance.

CLIFFORD.—These are indeed features that would give dignity to any scene; but you must admit that this unmeaning flat which stretches

everywhere from under our feet is sufficiently tiresome, notwithstanding the laudable efforts that are making to cover it with plantations.

Author.—It is monotonous enough, to be sure; but how often do we find inestimable worth concealed under an unpretending exterior. The apparently dull stretch of country before you is a pregnant example of this; for the charms of the river Findhorn that bisects it from west to east are so buried in its bosom as to be quite overlooked from hence. Grant will tell you, that if you were to follow the river upwards through all the mazes of its deep and shadowy glen, you would find that it exhibits scenery of the wildest and most magnificent character.

Grant.—Nay, it is hardly fair to refer him to me; for although I have a full impression of its grandeur upon my mind, which will not easily be effaced, I can give him no very accurate account of its pools or its streams, as regards their excellence for salmon angling.

Clifford.—Pho! none of your jokes, Mr. Grant. Although I like fishing and shooting, you know very well that I enjoy wild nature as much as either of you.

GRANT.—Ha! ha! ha! I know you do, my dear fellow.

CLIFFORD.—And moreover, I have so much admired the scenery, as well as the fishing-pools of the river lower down, that if what you now speak of equals that with which I am already so familiar, it must be magnificent indeed.

AUTHOR.—I think that it in many respects surpasses all that you have hitherto seen. In truth, I know no river scenery in Great Britain at all to be compared in sublimity to that of the Findhorn about Ferness. Indeed, it rises more into that great scale of grandeur exhibited by some of the Swiss gorges than any thing I have ever met with at home. But you must take the first opportunity of visiting it, Clifford. And then, in addition to the treat that nature will yield you during your ramble; and the good fishing which you will certainly have, I think you will be much gratified by the inspection of that interesting relic of antiquity, *The Cairn and Pillar of the Lovers*, which you will find there.

CLIFFORD.—What! ha! ha! ha! some Pyramus and Thisbe,—some Petrarch and Laura,—

among your heroes and heroines of the pemmican-I suppose!

AUTHOR.—No, no. The lonely obelisk, and the cairn from which it rises, may indeed have stood on the green holm of Ferness, with the rapid Findhorn sweeping around them for ages. They may have been there, whilst the great forests still spread themselves thickly over the country, but you would judge wrong, if you supposed them to have co-existed with my savages of the pemmican; for there must have been some considerable approach to civilization amongst a people who could have cut and transported that great mass of rough-grained sand-stone, of which the obelisk is formed, from the nearest quarries of the same rock, some fifteen or twenty miles off, to the spot where it has ever since stood, not to mention the beautiful hieroglyphical carvings with which it has been ornamented.

CLIFFORD.—Is there no legend attached to the monument?

GRANT.—There is; and our friend has woven it into a little poem, which he once repeated to me.

CLIFFORD.—Poem! Come, let's have it! You

need not fear to give it to me now, you know; for there is no birch at hand to punish you for your false quantities.

AUTHOR.—To tell you the truth, I am quite tired of repeating the story in prose; so, lame though my stanzas may be, I shall prefer risking your criticism. But you must remember, that it is one thing to climb a rugged heathery hill like this, and another thing to mount Parnassus.

THE CAIRN OF THE LOVERS.

THE raven of Denmark stretched his broad wing,
And shot his dark flight o'er Moray's fair fields;
And Findhorn's wild echoes were heard to ring,
With ill-omened croak, and the clash of shields.
And the yelling shouts of the conflict broil,
As Dane and Scot met in mortal toil,—
And cruel and fierce was the battle tide
That raged on rocky Findhorn's side;
And red was his wave, as it wailed away,
By that plain where his slaughtered warriors lay.

Yet stark stern in death was each hero's frown!
Each fell not till crushed by an hundred foes!
But, though hordes of Norsemen had borne them down,
Dire vengeance had soothed their dying throes.
For the bloody fight had not been won,
Till droop'd to the west the slanting sun,
And his golden beams a bright glory shed
Around each dying hero's head,
And lighted his soul with a cheering ray,
E'er his dim eye closed on the parting day.

But Findhorn's dark heights, and his wizzard wave,
Were lighted anon by far fiercer rays,
Calling bosoms abroad, that beat warm and brave,
To muster around the tall beacon's blaze,
And now, as afar o'er the plains they look,
Where glistens with flame each winding brook,
Red ruin enwraps both tower and town,
And wild Norsemen's shouts reach the beacon Doun;
And by shrieks of woe their hearts are wrung,
Till each Scottish breast to revenge is strung.

Whose steed-tramp resounds down the woody glen?
Who bears, as he rides, his proud crest so high,
His brow circled with gems, as chief of men,
And gold shining bright on his panoply?
'Tis Fergus the King!—The broad signal fire,
And the Norsemen's ravage, have roused his ire;
And, see, how his clustering horsemen sweep,
From the forest dark, and the dingle deep!
And, hark, to the tread of the many feet
That crowd to those heights where the waters meet!

Full little does Sewyn, the Norse King, know,
As his ruthless Danes rifle the peaceful plain,
That the Pass of Dhuie conceals a foe
Of far other mould than the shepherd swain.
And far other herds, and far other flocks
Than shepherds may feed, lie hid by these rocks.
He doubts not but all who a spear could wield,
Have fall'n in the strife of one bloody field.

Onward he presses—and, blindly led,
Go his Norsemen, with hopes of plunder fed.

The current was rapid, the stream was deep,
And the cumbered waters foam'd high and flash'd,
As horsemen and foot, from the shore so steep,
Through the Dhuie in thick confusion dash'd.
But scarce were they rid of the rushing tide,
Nor yet had they form'd on the meadow's side,
When by bursting yells the skies were rent,
With the gleam of arms glow'd the firmament,
And down, like the lightning's fiery shower,
Came King Fergus' force on King Sewyn's power.

And quail'd the black raven of Denmark then,
And he cower'd his wing, and he croak'd his fear;
And wide with the eagle's scream rang the glen,
As eager she snuff'd up her feast so near;
And each Norseman's heart, though ne'er so bold,
With panic-dread grew sick and cold,

Nor dared they abide the battle shock,
But fled away like some startled flock,
Or some scatter'd herd of timid deer,
When the howl of the gaunt mountain wolves they hear.

The slaughter was wide, and the vengeance deep,
That the Moray-men took of their Danish foes;
But yet deeper revenge did Findhorn reap,
As high, in his anger, his billows rose.
For he had wail'd that his wave before
The dye of his children's life's-blood bore;
But now—full glutted with hostile dead—
He rear'd him aloft—shook his oak-crown'd head,
And, roaring with fearful revelry,
He swept off his spoils to his kindred sea.

Who sits her and sighs on the castled isle
That on Loch-an-dorbe's dark breast doth float?
And why lights her eye with a radiant smile
As the moonbeam falls soft on that little boat?
A fairy thing it seems to be,
It glides o'er the wave so silently,

And like such sprites of witching power
It vanish'd beneath a shadowy tower,
As its slender side lost the moonbeam's ray,
Nor left it one trace of its liquid way.

That maiden who sat in the castled isle
Scann'd that little boat with no idle gaze;
And I ween that her eyes with their radiant smile,
Had hope blent with love in their glowing rays.
Malvina she was that maiden fair,
King Fergus' daughter, who sat her there.
She's gone!—and her pulse may hardly beat,
As in silence move her trembling feet
To the dungeon where lonely her lover lies,
And wastes the night in despairing sighs,
The son of King Sewyn in battle ta'en,
The gallant Prince Harrold, the brave young Dane.

She unlock'd the bolts with a master key,
And Prince Harrold sprang forth to his lady's side.
"Love favours our flight!" softly whispered she,
"At the postern stairs doth the boat abide."

Then they stole away by the shadowy wall.
Yet she sigh'd to quit her father's hall,
And her bosom heaved, and she dropp'd a tear,
Whilst her lover essayed to hush her fear,
And she clung to his arm as the little boat
Did o'er the wide lake in silence float.

'Twas a right trusty page that gave them way,
And he landed them 'neath the greenwood tree,
Where tied to the oak was a courser grey,
Prince Harrold to saddle sprang merrily.
The fair Malvina behind him placed
With snow-white arms her lover embraced.
The sun rose to welcome the bonny bride,
As they fled them straight to the Findhorn's side;
But its stream was swollen and barr'd their flight,
And drove them for refuge to Dulsie's height.

"Go, bring me Prince Harrold," King Fergus cried,
His royal eyes sparkling with beams of joy,

"My daughter Malvina shall be his bride,
And Moray be freed from the Dane's annoy.
Envoy to me hath King Sewyn sent,
And peace shall their bridal knot cement."
But Harrold was gone and Malvina fair!
Yet a sharp-witted page could teach him where,
And quick spoke the boy; for the King had told
Such glad tidings, I ween, as made him bold.

"To boat!" cried King Fergus, with eager haste,
And—"To horse!" when he touched the farther shore,
And furious he spurr'd through the forest waste,
As to Findhorn's stream his swift course he bore.
The lovers from Dulsie's wooded height
Saw Moray's Lord coming in kingly might.
'Twas better to tempt the swollen tide,
Than captive be torn from his bonny bride.
Harrold lifted Malvina to saddle again,
And down Dulsie's slope urged his steed

Oh, Findhorn shriek'd loud to warn them away!
But louder yet did the water-fiends yell.
Rebellious they laugh'd at his empty sway,
As vainly he strove their wild rage to quell.
And the sire's despairing cry was vain.
"Malvina!—my child!—oh, turn again!"
But the lovers twined on the courser grey,
Were swept from his outstretch'd eyes away,
And he smote his bosom and tore his hair,
As adown the big stream he sought the pair.

Why tarries the knight in his lonely way
At yon cairn on flowery Ferness holm?
Why scans he yon pillar, so rough and grey,
That rises from out its rudely-heap'd dome?
'Twas there the love-twined youth and maid
Unsever'd in death were sadly laid.
And there did King Fergus and Sewyn weep,
When they found them lock'd in death's cold sleep.
And Findhorn still lingers around their grave,
And sighs for their fate with repentant wave!

HILL OF THE AITNOCH.

AUTHOR.—See now how innumerable the stumps of the trees are here. They are peeping up through the moss in every direction. Conceive what a thick pine wood this must have once been.

GRANT.—You were certainly guilty of no great exaggeration when you said that a deer could hardly have penetrated it whilst it was standing in all its gloomy grandeur.

CLIFFORD.—It is well for our comfort that we can now pass so easily over its fallen majesty; and methinks the sooner we escape from so dreary a scene the better.

AUTHOR.—Let us keep more this way, then. A short walk will now bring us to the southern brow of the hill, whence a new scene will open on us.

CLIFFORD (*who first reaches the point.*)—Ha! what have we here? A dark lake,—its waves rolling sluggishly eastward, and breaking gently on a narrow stripe of yellow gravelly beach,—bare rocky hills without a tree,—and an island covered with the ruins of a very extensive castle. What do you call this wild and lonely scene?

AUTHOR.—That is Loch-an-Dorbe, with its ruined castle.

GRANT.—The remains of the castle seem to be very extensive.

AUTHOR.—They are said to occupy a space of not less than an hundred yards square.

CLIFFORD.—This, then, is the very castle whence your Danish Prince escaped with his lady-love. Let me tell you, that if their grey steed had not gone with a somewhat freer pace than your verses do, the old King of the castle would have caught them ere they had covered half the way to Dulsie.

GRANT.—I'll warrant me those huge round towers and massive curtains have many strange and eventful histories attached to them.

CLIFFORD.—Come, Signore Cicerone, prelect to us about it, if you please.

AUTHOR.—Loch-an-Dorbe was one of the few royal or national fortresses which Scotland possessed. When Edward the First traversed this country with his army in 1303, he came to Loch-an-Dorbe in the month of September, and occupied it for some time; and Edward the Third considered it as a place of so much importance, that he and Edward Baliol marched all the way from Perth to its relief in August 1336, when Catherine de Beaumont, widow of David de Hastings, Earl of Athol, and her son, were besieged in it by the brave Sir Andrew Moray, then governor of Scotland. Sir Andrew would have been overwhelmed by the superior force of the English monarch, had he not baffled pursuit, by crossing the river Findhorn at the celebrated pass, the Brig of Randolph; so called, as you know, from Randolph Earl of Moray, regent of Scotland. Another important historical fact is connected with this castle. It was here that William Bullock was confined. After abandoning the cause of Baliol, and after having risen to high honours under David the Second, he was enviously and maliciously accused of treason; and having been thrown into one of the dungeons within these massive walls, he was cruelly al-

lowed to perish of cold and hunger. We also know that the famous Alexander Stewart, son of King Robert the Second, and who, from his ferocious disposition was surnamed the Wolfe of Badenoch, possessed and inhabited this castle. It was from hence he is supposed to have issued when he made his famous descent into the low country of Moray, and fired the cathedral of Elgin, reducing that magnificent structure, that *speculum patriæ et decus regni*, as it was called, and many other religious edifices in the town, to a heap of ruins.

CLIFFORD.—Oh, you have told us enough, in all conscience, about that wild beast; "*adesso parliamo d'altro.*"

AUTHOR.—I am at a stand, so far as the history of Loch-an-Dorbe is concerned, excepting that I may add, that in more recent times it was possessed by the Earls of Moray, and passed from their hands into those of the Campbells of Cawdor. I have seen at Cawdor Castle a massive iron gate, believed to have been that of the castle of Loch-an-Dorbe, which tradition says was carried off from thence by Sir Donald Campbell of Cawdor, who bore it on his back all the way across the moors

till he set it down where it is now in use, the distance being not less than some twelve or fifteen miles. But this is a story much too marvellous for belief in these matter-of-fact days of ours.

CLIFFORD.—It is incredible enough, to be sure. Yet I have a story, a well authenticated story too, which I think will almost match it.

GRANT.—Out with it then.

CLIFFORD.—No, I promise you you don't get my stories at so very easy a rate; and for this simple reason, that they are by no means so plenty as yours. Besides, I have just been thinking that with this warm breeze, that so gently ripples the surface of the lake, I could kill a handsome dish of trouts this afternoon, if trouts there be within its watery world. Why might we not loiter off the remainder of the day about this lake?

GRANT.—I like the idea much. I perceive a nice-looking cottage on the other side, where I dare to say we may find lodging for the night.

AUTHOR.—That cottage is a shooting-lodge belonging to the proprietor; and were he there in person, we should not lack a kind and hospitable reception. But at present its doors are locked, and its rooms void.

CLIFFORD.—There is a house then, here, on the nearer shore, immediately below us; why should we not go there?

AUTHOR.—'Tis but a smoky uncomfortable place; but it may do well enough for a shelter for one night, and if you are content to abide there, so am I.

CLIFFORD.—Pho! as to comfort, I am a soldier, and can rough it. I have lain out all night to kill the enemies of my country, and would do no less at any time for a good day's shooting or fishing.

AUTHOR (*addressing Gilly, who was leading a pony with panniers*).—Go down thither then, and see our quarters made as comfortable as may be.

CLIFFORD.—Aye, that will do. Come along, let us to work without more hesitation or talk. I am all impatience.

Having sent round to borrow the proprietor's boat, we embarked on the lake, and were soon intensely occupied in all the exciting anxieties of the angle. Our success was various and unequal, like that of man in the great lottery of human life. It was not always when basking in the sunshine that

we were most successful. Sometimes a warm shadow would cross the lake, and the trouts would rise and hook themselves three at a time on our lines. The bottom of the boat became alive, and shone and glittered with the growing numbers of our golden and silver captives. Anon, every cast we made was in vain; and then, when the foolish fish began again to bite, our eagerness was such, that we forgot each other's lines; and the loss of hooks, the destruction of the finer parts of our tackle, and the fracture of delicate top pieces, became the result of our numerous and grievous entanglements. Poor Clifford could not account for a sudden cessation of his luck, at the very time that ours appeared to be doubled, and he went on in no very good humour, flogging the water unsuccessfully, whilst Grant and I were catching two and three at each cast; till at last, to his great chagrin, he found that he had been all the while fishing without flies, which were uselessly and most provokingly sticking in the rough coat, and around the neck and head of my great Newfoundland dog Bronte, to the poor brute's great inconvenience. He did not fail to make up very quickly for this

bad luck, however. Our evening was altogether most delightfully spent; for when we grew tired of the angle, we landed on the island and wandered among the extensive ruins which cover it. We then sat on the mouldering walls of the castle till we saw the sun sink behind the western hill; after which we returned to the shore, and sought our place of retreat.

It was a small old-fashioned house, once used as a sort of hunting lodge. It consisted of two stories, with little else than one ruinous room in each, the whole being filled with the great smoke that arose from the kitchen fire. But the exercise we had had, added to our hunger, prepared us for being pleased with any accommodation; and after a supper well eked out by a fritto of the delicious trouts we had taken, we drew our stools around the fire, to enjoy a temperate cup of pure Highland whisky, diluted with water from a neighbouring spring.

GRANT.—Now for your story, Clifford.

CLIFFORD.—'Tis of a famous Highlander, called John Mackay of Ross-shire. I got the narrative, with all its nationalities, from an old Scottish brother officer of mine, a certain major of the name of Macmillan, who knew the hero of it well

GRANT.—I should have hardly looked for such a story from a Sassenach like you.

CLIFFORD.—Tut. You know very well that my mother was a Highlandwoman, and that I have moreover always had a strong feeling for Scotland, and especially for the Highlands, as well as for every thing connected with these romantic regions, where, let me tell you, I have had some wanderings as well as you.

AUTHOR.—We admit your right to tell your story. So now, come away with it without farther preface.

CLIFFORD.—If I tell you anything, I must very nearly tell you all honest John's life. Have you patience for so long a narrative?

GRANT.—We shall give you the full duration of the burning of these moss-fir faggots. Will that serve you?

CLIFFORD.—I think my story will have expired before them. And by that time we shall all be nearly ready for our blankets and heather; for such, I presume, will be our fate to-night.

LEGEND OF JOHN MACKAY OF ROSS-SHIRE, CALLED IAN MORE ARRACH, OR BIG JOHN THE RENTER OF THE MILK OF THE COWS.

My old Highland major told me, what perhaps you know better than I do, I mean, that some half century or more ago, before sheep were quite so much in fashion in the Highlands as I believe they now are, and when cattle were the only great staple of the country, the proprietors of the glens had them always well filled with cows. In those times it was the custom in Ross-shire to allow one calf only to be reared for each two cows of the herd. Each calf with its pair of cows was called a *Cauret*; and these caurets were let to renters, who, as they might find it most advisable, took one or more of them in lease, as it were, according as their circumstances might dictate; and the renter being obliged to rear one calf for the

landlord for each cauret he held, he was allowed the remainder of the milk for his own share of the profit. These milk-renters were called *arrachs*; and John Mackay, the hero of my story, was called Ian More Arrach, from his lofty stature, and from his being one of these milk-renters. According to my informant the major, who personally knew him, Ian well merited the addition of More; for he declared that he was the most powerful man he had ever beheld.

It so happened that Ian went down on one occasion into Strath-Connan, to attend a great market or fair that was held there, probably to dispose of his cheese; and as he was wandering about after his business was over, his eye was caught exactly like those of some of our simple trouts of the lake here, by the red and tinsel, and silk and wool, and feather glories of a recruiting serjeant and his party. He had never seen anything of the kind before, and he stood staring at them in wonderment as they passed. Nor did his solid and substantial form fail to fill the serjeant's eye in its turn; but if I am to give you a simile illustrative of the manner in which it did so, I must say that it was in the same way that the

plump form of a well-fed trout might fill the greedy eye of a gaunt pike. He resolved to have him as a recruit. The party was accordingly halted immediately opposite to the spot where Ian was standing; and after one or two shrill shrieks of the fife, and a long roll of the drum, the martial orator began an oration, which lasted a good half hour, in which he largely expatiated on the glories of a soldier's life, and the riches and honours it was certain one day or other to shower on the heads of all those who embraced it. The greater part of this harangue was lost upon Ian More Arrach, partly because he but very imperfectly understood English, and partly because his senses were too much lost in admiration. But when the grand scarlet-coated gentleman approached him with a smiling air, and gaily slapping him on the back, exclaimed,—

"Come along with us, my brave fellow, and taste the good beef and mustard, and other provender, that King George so liberally provides for us gentlemen of his army, and drink his Majesty's health with us in his own liquor. Come, and see how jollily we soldiers live!"

His wits returned to him at once, and he quick-

ly understood enough of what was said to him, to make him grin from ear to ear, till every tooth in his head was seen to manifest its own particular unmingled satisfaction, and his morning's walk from his distant mountain residence having wonderfully sharpened his appetite, he followed the serjeant into a booth with all manner of alacrity, and quietly took his seat at a table that groaned beneath an enormous round of beef, flanked by other eatables, on which the hungry recruits fell pell-mell, and in demolishing which Ian rendered them his best assistance. The booth or tent was constructed, as such things usually are, of some old blankets stitched together, and hung over a cross-stick, that was tied horizontally to the tops of two poles fixed upright in the ground. It was the ambulatory tavern of one of those travelling ale and spirit sellers who journey from one fair or market to another, for the charitable purpose of vending their victuals and drink to the hungry and thirsty who can afford to pay for them. The space around the interior of the worsted walls of this confined place was occupied with boxes, vessels, and barrels of various kinds; and whilst the landlord, a knock-kneed cheesepairing of a man, who had once been

a tailor, sat at his ease in one corner reckoning his gains, his wife, a fat bustling red-nosed little woman, was continually running to and fro, to serve the table with liquor. Many were the loyal toasts given, and they were readily drank by Ian, more, perhaps, from relish of the good stuff that washed them down, than from any great perception he had of their intrinsic merit. His head was by no means a weak one. But the serjeant and his assistants were too well acquainted with all the tricks of their trade, not to take such measures as made him unwittingly swallow three or four times as much liquor as they did.

"Now, my gallant Highlander," exclaimed the serjeant, when he thought him sufficiently wound up for his purpose, "see how nobly his Majesty uses us. Starve who may, we never want for plenty. But this is not all. Hold out your hand, my brave fellow. See, here is a shilling with King George's glorious countenance upon it. He sends you this in his own name, as a mark of his especial favour and regard for you."

"Fod, but she wonders tat sae big an' braw a man as ta King wad be thinkin' on Ian Arrach at a', at a'," said the Highlander, surveying the shil-

ling as it lay in the palm of his hand; "but troth, she wonders a hantel mair, tat sin King Shorge was sendin' ony sing till her ava, she didna send her a guinea fan her hand was in her sporran at ony rate. But sic as it be, she taks it kind o' ta man;" and saying so, he quietly transferred into his own sporran that which he believed to have come from the King's.

"That shilling is but an arnest of all the golden guineas he will by and bye give you," said the serjeant; "not to mention all those bags of gold, and jewels, and watches which he will give you his gracious leave to take from his enemies, after you shall have cut their throats."

"Tut, tut, but she no be fond o' cuttin' trotts," replied Ian; "she no be good at tat trade at a at a'."

"Ha! no fears but you will learn that trade fast enough," said the serjeant. "You mountaineers generally do. You are raw yet; but wait till you have beheld my glorious example—wait till you have seen me sheer off half a dozen heads or so, as I have often done, of a morning before breakfast, and you will see that there is nothing more simple."—

"Och, och!" exclaimed Ian, with a shrug of his shoulders, that spoke volumes.

"Aye, aye," continued the serjeant, "'tis true, you cannot expect that at the very first offer you are to be able to take off your heads quite so clean at a blow as I can do. Indeed, I am rather considered a rare one at taking off heads. For example—I remember that I once happened to take a French grenadier company in flank, when, with the very first slash of my sword, I cut clean through the necks of the three first file of men, front rank and rear rank, making no less than six heads off at the first sweep. And it was well for the company that they happened only to be formed two deep at the time, for if they had been three deep, no less than nine heads must have gone."

"Keep us a'!" cried some of the wondering recruits.

"Nay," continued the serjeant; "had it not been for the unlucky accident that by some mistake the fourth front-rank man was a leetle shorter than the other, so that the sword encountered his chin-bone, the fourth file would have been beheaded like the rest."

"Och, och!" cried Ian again.

"But," continued the serjeant, "as I said before, though you cannot expect to take up this matter by nattral instinck, as it were, yet I'll be bail that a big stout souple fellow like you will not see a month's sarvice before you will shave off a head as easily as I shave this here piece of cheese, and—— confound it, I have cut my thumb half through."

"Her nanesell wunna be meddlin' wi' ony sic-can bluidy wark," said Ian, shaking his head, and shrugging his shoulders. "She no be wantan' to be a boutcher. But, noo," added he, lifting up a huge can of ale, "she be biddin' ye a' gude evenin', shentilmans, and gude hells, and King Shorge gude hells, an' mony sanks to ye a'; and tell King Shorge she sall keep her bit shullin' on a string tied round her neck for a bonny die." And, so rising up, Ian put the ale can to his head, and drained it slowly to the bottom.

"But, my good fellow," said the serjeant, who had been occupied, whilst Ian's draught lasted, in tying up his thumb in a handkerchief, and giving private signals to his party, "you are joking about bidding us good evening—we cannot part with you so soon."

"Troth, she maun be goin' her ways home," said Ian, "she has a far gate to traivil."

"Stuff!" cried the serjeant; "surely you cannot have forgotten that you have taken King George's money, and that you have now the great privilege of holding the honourable and lucrative situation of a gentleman private in his Majesty's infantry, having been duly and volunteerly enlisted before all these here witnesses."

"Ou, na," said Ian, gravely and seriously; "she didna' list—na, na, she didna' list; troth, na. So, wussin' ta gude company's gude hells wanss more, an' King Shorge's hells, she maun just be goin' for she has a lang gate o' hill afore her."

"Nay, master, we can't exactly part with you so easily," said the serjeant, rising up. "You are my recruit, and you must go nowhere without my leave."

"Hoot, toots," replied Ian, making one step towards the door of the booth; "an' she has her nane leave, troth, she'll no be axin' ony ither."

"I arrest you in the King's name!" said the serjeant, laying hold of Ian by the breast.

"Troth, she wudna' be wussin' to hort her,"

said Ian, lifting up the serjeant like a child, before he knew where he was; "but sit her doon tere, oot o' ta way, till her nane sell redds hersell of ta lave, and wuns awa'."

Making two strides with his burden towards a large cask of ale that stood on end in one corner of the place, he set the gallant hero down so forcibly on the top of it, that the crazy rotten boards gave way, and he was crammed backwards, in a doubled up position, into the yawning mouth of the profound, whilst surges of beer boiled and frothed up around him. Ian would have charitably relieved the man from so disagreeable a situation, which was by no means that which he had intended him to occupy; but, ere he wist, he was assailed by the whole party like a swarm of bees. The place of strife was sufficiently narrow, a circumstance much in favour of the light troops who now made a simultaneous movement on him, with the intention of prostrating him on the ground, but he stood like a colossus, and nothing could budge him; whilst, at the same time, he never dealt a single blow as if at all in anger, but ever and anon, as his hands became so far liberated as to enable him to seize on one of his assailants, he wrenched him away from his own

person, and tossed him from him, either forth of the tent door, or as far at least as its bounds would allow, some falling among the hampers and boxes —some falling like a shower upon the poor owners of the booth,—and some falling upon the unfortunate serjeant. The red-nosed priestess of this fragile temple of Bacchus, shrieked in sweet harmony with the groans of the knock-kneed and broken down tailor, and in the midst of the melee, one unhappy recruit, who was winging his way through the air from the powerful projectile force of Ian More, came like a chain-shot against the upright poles of the tent—the equilibrium of its whole system was destroyed—down came the cross beam—the covering blankets collapsed and sank, —and, in a moment, nothing appeared to the eyes of those without but a mighty heap, that heaved and groaned underneath like some volcanic mountain in labour previous to an eruption. And an eruption to be sure there was—for, to the great astonishment of the whole market people, Ian More Arrach's head suddenly appeared through a rent that took place in the rotten blanket, with his face in a red hot state of perspiration, and his mouth gasping for breath. After panting like a

porpus for a few seconds, he made a violent effort, reared himself upon his legs, and thrusting his feet out at the aperture, which had served as a door to the tent, he fled away with all the effect of a fellucca under a press of sail, buffetting his way through the multitude of people and cattle, as a vessel would toss aside the opposing billows; and then shooting like a meteor up the side of the mountain that flanked the strath, he left his flowing drapery behind him in fragments and shreds adhering to every bush he passed by, bounded like a stag over its sky line, and disappeared from the astonished eyes of the beholders.

It were vain to attempt to describe the re-organization of the discomfited troops, who, when their strange covering was thus miraculously removed, arose singly from the ground utterly confounded, and began to move about limping and cursing amidst the bitter wailings of the unhappy people, whose frail dwelling had so marvellously fled from them. The attention of the party was first called to their gallant commander, who, with some difficulty, was extracted from the mouth of the beer barrel, dripping like a toast from a tankard. His rage may be conceived better than told.

His honour had been tarnished, and his interest put in jeopardy. He, whose stirring tales of desperate deeds of arms and fearful carnage, had so often extended the jaws of the Highland rustics whom he had kidnapped, and raised their very bonnets on the points of their bristling hair with wonder,—who could devour fire as it issued from the mouth of a cannon,—and who could contend single-handed against a dozen of foes, to be so unceremoniously crammed, by the arm of one man, into a beer barrel, in the presence of those very recruits, and to be afterwards basely extracted from it before the eyes of the many who had listened to his boastful harangues. And then, moreover, to be chouced out of the anticipated fruits of his wily hospitality, as well as of a silver shilling, by the flight of the broad-shouldered Celt, whom he thought he had secured, and of whom he expected to have made so handsome a profit. All this was not to be borne,—and, accordingly, wide as was Ross-shire, he determined most indefatigably to search every inch of it until he should again lay hands on him. From the enquiries made on the spot, it was considered as certain that Ian More had gone directly home to his lonely bothy, in a

high and solitary valley, some dozen of miles or so from the place where they then were; and as one of the recruits knew the mountain tracks well enough to act as guide, he collected the whole of his forces, amounting to nearly double the number of those who had been engaged in the battle of the booth, and after having refreshed and fortified them and himself with all manner of available stimuli, he put himself at their head, and set forward on his expedition at such an hour of the night as might enable them to reach the dwelling of Ian More Arrach, before he was likely to leave it in the morning in pursuit of his daily occupation.

Ian More was but little acquainted with the tricks of this world; and no wonder, for the habitation in which he lived, and from which he rarely migrated, was situated in one of those desert glens which are to be found far up in the mountains, where they nurse and perhaps give birth to the minuter branches of those streams, which, running together in numbers, and accumulating as they roll onwards through wider and larger valleys, go on expanding with the opening country, until they unite to water the extended and fertile plains in some broad and important river. The ascent

to the little territory of which Ian More was the solitary sovereign, was by a steep and narrow ravine among rocks, down which the burn raged against the opposing angles, like a wayward child that frets and fumes against every little obstacle that occurs to the indulgence of its wishes. Higher up its course was cheerful and placid, like the countenance of the same child perhaps, when in the best humour and in the full enjoyment for the time being of all its desires, laughing as it went its way among water-lillies, ranunculuses, and yellow marygolds, meandering quietly through a deep and well swarded soil, that arose from either side of it in a gently curving slope to the base of two precipitous walls of rock, within the shelter of which the caurets of Ian More had ample pasture for a stretch of about a quarter of a mile upwards to the spot where the cliffs, rising in altitude, and apparently unscalable, shut in the glen in a natural amphitheatre. There the burn issued from a small circular lochan; and it was on the farther margin of this piece of water, and immediately at the foot of the crags behind it, that the small sod hovel of Ian More Arrach was placed, so insignificant a speck amid the vastness of the surrounding features of

nature, as to be hardly distinguished from the rock itself, especially when approached, as it now was, in the grey light of the morning, until the serjeant and his party had come very near to it.

The leader of the enterprise felt that no time was to be lost in a survey, lest, whilst they were hesitating, Ian might perceive them, and again make his escape. A simultaneous rush, therefore, was made for the door; but albeit that Ian generally left it unfastened, he had somehow or other been led to secure it on this occasion, by lifting a stone of no ordinary size, which usually served him as a seat, and placing it as a barricade against it on the inside. Their first attempt to force it being thus rendered altogether unavailing,—

"John Mackay, otherwise Ian More Arrach, open to us in the name of King George," cried the serjeant, standing at the full length of his pike from the door, and poking against it with the point of the weapon.

"Fat wud King Shorge hae wi' Ian More," demanded the Highlander.

"Come, open the door and surrender peaceably," cried the serjeant, "you are the King's lawful recruit. You have been guilty of mutiny and

desartion; but if you will surrender at discretion, and come quietly along with us, it is not unlikely that, in consideration of your being as yet untaught, and still half a savage, you may not be exactly shot this bout; though it is but little marcy you desarve, considering how confoundedly my back aches with the rough treatment I had from you. Keep close to the door, my lads," continued he, sinking his voice, "and be ready to spring on him the moment he comes out."

Whilst the serjeant yet spoke, the whole hovel began to heave like some vast animal agonized with internal throes. The men of the party stood aghast for one moment, and in the next the back wall of the sod edifice was hurled outwards, and the roof, losing its support, fell inwards, raising a cloud of dust so dense as utterly to conceal for a time the individual who was the cause and instrument of its destruction.

"Ha! look sharp, my lads!" cried the serjeant, "be on your mettle!"

The words were scarcely out of his mouth, when the herculean form of Ian More arose before his eyes, from amidst the debris and dust, as did the

figure of the Genii from the jar, before those of the fisherman in the eastern fable.

"There he is, by Jupiter!" cried the serjeant, involuntarily retreating a step or two. "On him! —on him, and seize him, my brave boys!"

The nature of the spot seemed to forbid all hope of escape. The party blocked up the space in front of the bothy, and the narrow stripe of ground that stretched along between the lake on the one hand, and the cliffs on the other, grew more and more confined as it ran backwards, until it disappeared altogether at a point about an hundred yards distant, where the crags rose sheer up out of the water. In this direction Ian More moved slowly off, after throwing on the throng of his assailants a grim smile, which, however, had more of pity than of anger in it. Before he had taken a dozen steps, the most forward of the party were at his skirts. He turned smartly round, and suddenly catching up the first man in his arms, he sent him spinning through the air into the lake, as if he had been a puppy dog. The next in succession was seized with astonishment, but before he could shake himself free of it, he was seized by something more formidable, I mean by the iron hands of Ian More,

who flung him also far amid the waters after his fellow. A whole knot of those who followed then sprang upon him at once, but he patted them off, one after another, as if they had been so many flies, and that he had been afraid to hurt them; but, as it was impossible for him to accommodate his hits with mathematical precision to the gentleness of his intentions, some of the individuals who received them bore the marks of them for many a day afterwards. The ardour of the attack became infinitely cooled down. But still there were certain fiery spirits who coveted glory. These, as they came boldly up, successively shared the fate of those who had gone before them. Some were stretched out, as chance threw them, to measure their dimensions on the terra firma, whilst others were hurled hissing hot into the lake, where they were left at leisure to form some estimate of their own specific gravity in a depth of water which was just shallow enough to save them from drowning. Meanwhile, the object of their attack continued to stalk slowly onwards at intervals, smiling on them from time to time, as he turned to survey the shattered remains of the attacking army, that now followed him at a respectful distance, and halted

every time he faced them. The serjeant, like an able general, kept poking them on in the rear with his pike, and upbraiding them for their cowardice. Meanwhile Ian gradually gained ground on them, and having produced an interval of some twenty or thirty yards between himself and them, just as they thought that he had arrived at a point where further retreat was impossible, he suddenly disappeared into a crack in the face of the cliff, hitherto unobserved, and on reaching the place, they found that the fearless mountaineer had made his slippery way up the chimney-like cleft, amidst the white foam of a descending rill, that was one of the main feeders of the Lochan, into which it poured.

"The feller has vanished into the clouds," said the serjeant, shuddering with horror as he looked up the perilous rocky funnel, and, at the same time, secretly congratulating himself that Ian had not stood to bay. "He has vanished into the clouds, just out of our very hands, as I may say. Who was to think of there being any such ape's ladder as this here?"

The party returned, sullen and discomfited, to the strath, and their leader now gave up all hopes of capturing Ian More Arrach, either by strata-

gem or force. But his thirst for the large sum which he expected to realize by producing such a man at head-quarters, rendered him quite restless and unremitting in his inquiries, the result of which was, that he found out that Lord Seaforth, then, I believe, Lord Lieutenant of the county, might do something towards apprehending the runaway; he accordingly waited on his Lordship to request his interference for procuring the seizure of John Mackay, surnamed Ian More Arrach, a deserter from his Majesty's service. Lord Seaforth enquired into the case, and believing that the man had been fairly enlisted, he procured his immediate appearance at Brahan Castle, by going the right way to work with him. There, it so happened, that Lord Rae was at that time a visitor, and Lord Seaforth called in his aid to work upon Ian More, who bowed to the ground in submission to the wishes of his chief.

"This is an unlucky business, Ian More," said Lord Rae, "it seems that you have deserted from the King's service, after having accepted his money, and that moreover, you have twice deforced the officer and party. Your case, I fear, is a bad one. Depend upon it, they will have you, if it should

cost them the sending of a whole regiment after you; and then, if you give them so much trouble, no one can say what may be the consequence. Take my advice, and give yourself up quietly. I shall write to your commanding officer in such terms as will save you from any very bad consequences; and with the recommendations which you shall have, there is no saying but you may be an officer ere long. All the Mackays are brave fellows; and if all I have heard be true, it appears that you are no disgrace to the name."

Ian was too proud of the interest taken in him by his noble chief, to dispute his advice or wishes for one moment. He would have sacrificed his life for him. And accordingly, abandoning his mountain-glen and his caurets, he surrendered himself to the serjeant, who implicitly obeyed the instructions he received from Lord Rae to treat him kindly, particularly as they were backed up with a handsome douceur; and Ian was soon afterwards embarked to join his regiment, then quartered in Guernsey.

The regiment that Ian More was attached to was almost entirely a new levy, and the recruits were speedily put on garrison duty, frivolous per-

haps in itself, but probably given to them more as a lesson, in order that they might become familiar with it, than from any absolute necessity for it. It so happened, that the first guard that Ian mounted, he was planted as a night sentinel on the Queen's Battery. The instructions given to his particular post were to take especial care that no injury should happen to a certain six-pounder, which there rested on its carriage; and when the corporal of the guard marched Ian up as a relief, he laughed heartily to hear the earnest assurances which he gave, in answer to the instructions he received from the man he was relieving, "Tat not a bonn o' ta body o' ta wee gunnie sould be hurt, at a', at a', while he had ta care o' her."

And Ian kept his word; for he watched over the beautiful little piece of ordnance with the greatest solicitude. It so happened, however, that whilst he was walking his lonely round, a heavy shower of rain began to fall, and a bitter freezing blast soon converted every particle of it into a separate cake of ice, which cut against his nose and eyes, and nearly scarified his face, so that much as he had been accustomed to the snarling climate of the higher regions of the interior of Scotland, he felt as

if he would lose his eye-sight from the inclemency of the weather; and then he began to reason that if he should lose his eye-sight, how could he take care of the gun? His anxiety for the safety of his charge, united to a certain desire for his own comfort, induced him gravely to consider what was best to be done. He surveyed the gun, and as he did so, he began to think that it was extremely absurd that he should be standing by its side for two long hours, whilst he might so easily provide for its security in some place of shelter; and accordingly he quietly removed it from its carriage, and poising it very adroitly on his shoulder, he carried it deliberately away.

Strong as Ian was, the position and the weight of the six-pounder, considerably more than half a ton, compelled him to walk with a stiff mien and a solemn, measured, and heavy tread. He had to pass by two or three sentinels. These were all raw unformed recruits like himself, and full of Highland superstitions. Each of them challenged him in succession as his footstep approached; but Ian was too much intent on keeping his burden properly balanced to be able to reply. He moved on steadily and silently therefore, with his eye-balls

protruded and fixed, from the exertion he was making, and with his whole countenance wearing a strange and portentous expression of anxiety, which was heightened by a certain pale blue light that fell upon it from one part of the stormy sky. Instead of attempting to oppose or to arrest such a phantom, which came upon them in the midst of the tempest, like some unearthly being which had been busied in the very creation of it, each sentry fled before it, and the whole rampart was speedily cleared.

It was not many minutes after this that the visiting serjeant went his rounds. To his great surprise, he was not challenged by the sentry upon Ian More's post; and to his still greater astonishment, he was permitted to advance with impunity till he discovered that Ian More was not there. But what was yet most wonderful of all, the gun of which he was the especial guardian was gone.

"Lord ha' mercy on us!" exclaimed the corporal, "I see'd the man planted here myself alongside the piece of ordinance; what can have become of them both?"

"'Tis mortal strange," said the serjeant. "Do you stand fast here, corporal, till we go down the rampart a bit, to see if we can see any thing."

"Nay, with your leave, serjeant," said the corporal, "I see no use in leaving me here to face the devil. Had we not better go and report this strange matter to the officer of the guard?"

"Nonsense,—obey my orders; and if you do see the devil, be sure you make him give you the countersign," said the serjeant, who had had all such fears rubbed off by a long life of hard service.

On walked the serjeant along the rampart. The other sentries were gone also. One man only he at last found, and him he dragged forth from under a gun-carriage.

"Why have you deserted your post, you trembling wretch?" demanded the serjeant.

"Did you not see it, then?" said the man, with a terrified look.

"See what?" asked the serjeant.

"The devil, in the shape of Ian More Arrach, with his face like a flaming furnace, shouldering a four-and-twenty pounder," replied the man; "och, it was a terrible sight."

"By jingo, my boy, your back will be made a worse spectacle of before long, if I don't mistake," said the serjeant.

By this time a buzz of voices was heard. The

guard had been alarmed by the fugitive sentries, whose fright had carried them with ghastly looks to the guard-room. The guard had alarmed the garrison, and the whole place was thrown into confusion. Soldiers, non-commissioned officers, and officers, were seen running and heard vociferating in all directions, lanterns and flambeaux were everywhere flitting about like fire-flies, and soldiers' wives and children were heard screaming and crying. The cause of the tumult was reported in a thousand different ways. Some of the least rational of the women and juveniles even believed and asserted that an enemy had landed on the island; whilst those who really were aware that the true cause of the uproar was Ian More's mysterious disappearance, were employed in searching everywhere for him and the six-pounder; but he was nowhere to be found, and wonder and astonishment multiplied at every step.

At length the tumult rose to such a height, that the commanding-officer was roused, and hurrying on his clothes, he came running to the Queen's Battery to know what all the hubbub was about. The place was filled with a crowd of all ranks, each individual of which was ready to hazard his

own conjecture in explanation of this most unaccountable event. All gave way at the colonel's approach. After hearing what had happened, he enquired into the circumstances so far as they were known; he listened calmly and attentively to the various accounts of those who had been making ineffectual search, and having heard all of them patiently to an end—

"This is very strange," said he; "but well as you have searched, it appears to me that none of you seem to have ever thought of looking for him in his barrack-room. Let us go there."

Off went the colonel, accordingly, to the barrack-room, followed by as many curious officers and soldiers as could well crowd after him; and there, to be sure, snug in bed, and sound asleep, lay Ian More Arrach, with the piece of artillery in his arms, and his cheek close to the muzzle of it, which was sticking out from under the blanket that covered both of them. The spectacle was too ridiculous, even for the colonel's gravity. He and all around him gave way to uncontrollable bursts of laughter, that speedily awaked Ian from the deep sleep in which he was plunged. He stared around him with astonishment.

"What made you leave your post, you rascal?" demanded the serjeant of the guard, so much provoked as to forget himself before his commanding-officer.

"Nay, nay," said the colonel, who already knew something of Ian, from the letter which he had received from his chief, "you cannot say that he has left his post; for you see he has taken his post along with him."

"Is na ta wee bit gunnie as weil aside her nanesell here," said Ian, with an innocent smile. "Is she na mockell better here aside her nanesell, nor wi' her nanesell stannin cauld an weet aside her yonder on ta Pattry?"

"Well, well," said the colonel, after a hearty laugh. "But how did you manage to bring the gun here?" "Ou troth her nanesell carried her," replied Ian.

"Come, then," said the colonel, "if you will instantly carry it back again to the place whence you took it, nothing more shall be said about it."

"Toots! but she'll soon do tat," said Ian, starting out of bed, and immediately raising the gun to his shoulder; he set out with it, followed by the colonel and every one within reach; and, to the

great astonishment of all of them, he marched slowly and steadily towards the battery with it, and replaced it on its carriage, amidst the loud cheers of all who beheld him.

As Ian was naturally a quiet, sober, peaceable, and well-behaved man, a thorough knowledge of his duty soon converted him into a most invaluable soldier; and nature having made him a perfect model, both as to mould and symmetry of form, the colonel, who took a peculiar fancy to him, soon saw that he was altogether too tall and fine looking a man to be kept in the ranks. Accordingly he had him struck off from the ordinary routine of domestic duty, and drilled as a fugleman, in which distinguished situation Ian continued to figure until his services were terminated by an unlucky accident.

It happened one evening that the colonel of an English regiment dined at the mess of the Highland corps. In the course of conversation this gentleman offered a bet that he had a man who would beat any individual who could be picked from among the Highlanders. One of the Highland officers immediately took him up and engaged to produce a man to meet the English cham-

pion next morning. By break of day, therefore, he sent for Ian More Arrach, and told him what had occurred, and then added—" You are to be my man, Ian; and I think it will be no hard thing for you who shouldered the six pounder to pound this boasting pock-pudding."

" Troth na," said Ian, shaking his head, " ta pock-pudden no done her nae ill,—fat for wad she be fighten her? Troth her honor may e'en fight ta man hersell, for her nanesell wull no be doin' nae siccan a thing."

" Tut! nonsense, man," said the officer, " you must fight him, aye and lick him too; and you shall not only carry off the honor, but you shall have a handsome purse of money for doing so."

" Na, na," said Ian, " ta man no dune her nae ill ava, an she'll no be fighten for ony bodey's siller but King Shorge's."

" Surely you're not afraid of him," said the officer, trying to rouse his pride.

" Hout na!" replied Ian More, with a calm good humoured smile; " she no be feart for no man livin'."

" So you wont fight," said the officer.

"Troth na," said Ian, "she canna be fighten wissout nae raison."

"Surely your own honor—the honor of the regiment—the honor of Scotland—the purse of gold—and my wishes thus earnestly expressed, ought to be reasons enough with you. But since you refuse, I must go to Alister Mackay; he will have no such scruples, I'll warrant me."

This last observation was a master-stroke of policy on the part of the officer. Alister Mackay was a stout athletic young man; but he was by no means a match for the English prize-fighter. Nor did the officer mean that he should be opposed to him; for he only named him, knowing that he was a cousin of Ian More's, and one for whom he had the affection of a brother; and he was quite sure that his apprehension for Alister's safety would be too great to allow him to be absent from the field, if it did not induce him to take his place in the combat. And it turned out as he had anticipated. Ian came, eagerly pressing forward into the throng; and no sooner did he appear, than the officer pointed him out to the Englishman, as the man that was to be pitted against him; and as the Highlanders naturally took it for granted, that the big

fugleman was to be their man, they quickly made a ring for him amidst loud cheering.

"Come away Goliah! come on!" cried the Englishman, tossing his hat into the air, and his coat to one side. Ian minded him not. But the growing and intolerable insolence of the bully did the rest; for, presuming on Ian's apparent backwardness, he strode up to him with his arms a kimbo, and spit in his face.

"Fat is she do tat for?" asked Ian simply of those around him.

"He has done it to make people believe that you are a coward, and afraid to fight him,"—said the Highland officer, who backed him.

"Tell her no to do tat again," said Ian seriously.

"There!" said the boxer; repeating the insult.

Without showing the smallest loss of temper, Ian made an effort to lay hold of his opponent, but the Englishman squared at him, and hit him several smart blows in succession, not one of which the unpractised Highlander had the least idea of guarding.

"Ha!" exclaimed the Highland officer, "I fear you will be beaten, Ian."

"Foo!" cried Ian coolly, "she be strikin' her to be sure, but she be na hurtin' her. But an she disna gie ower an her nanesell gets one stroak at her, she'll swarrants she'll no seek nae mair."

The Englishman gave him two or three more hard hits that went against his breast, as if they had gone against an oaken door; but at last Ian raised his arm, and swept it round horizontally with a force that broke through all his antagonist's guards; and the blow striking his left cheek, as if it had come from a sledge hammer, it actually drove the bones of the jaw on that side quite through the opposite skin, and, at the same time, smashed the whole skull to fragments. The man fell, like a log, dead on the spot; and horror and astonishment seized the spectators.

"Och hone! och hone!" cried Ian More, running to lift him from the ground, in an agony of distress, "She's dootin' she kilt ta poor man."

Ian was thrown into a fit of the deepest despair and sorrow by this sad catastrophe, sufficiently proving to every one around him, that his heart was made of the most generous stuff; and, indeed, the effect of the horrible spectacle they had witnessed, was such as to throw a gloom on all who

were present, and especially on those who were more immediately concerned with the wager. The case was decidedly considered as one of justifiable homicide. It was hushed up by general consent, and a pass was granted to Ian to return to Scotland.

As he was slowly journeying homeward, Ian happened to spend a night at Stonehaven, and, as he was inquiring of his landlord as to the way he was to take in the morning, the man told him that he might save some distance by taking a short cut through the park of Ury, the residence of Mr. Barclay of Ury, who, as you probably know, was even more remarkable for feats of bodily strength than his son, Captain Barclay, the celebrated pedestrian.

"Ye may try the fut-road through the park," said Ian's host; "but oddsake, man, tak' care an' no meet the laird, for he's an awfu' chiel, though he be a Quaker, and gif ye do meet him I rauken that ye'll just hae to come yere ways back again."

"Fat for she do tat?" demanded Ian.

"Ou, he's a terrible man the laird," continued the landlord. "What think ye?—there was ae night that a poor tinker body had putten his bit

pauney into ane of the laird's inclosures, that it might get a sly rug o' the grass. Aweel, the laird comes oot in the mornin', an' the moment he spied the beast, he ga'ed tilt like anither Samson, and he lifted it up in his airms and flang it clean oot ower the dyke. As sure as ought, gif he meets you, an' he disna throw you ower the dyke, he'll gar ye gang ilka fit o' the road back again."

"Tuts! she'll try," replied Ian.

Soon after sunrise, Ian took the forbidden path, and he had pursued it without molestation for a considerable way, when he heard some one hallooing after him, and turning his head to look back, he beheld a gentleman whom he at once guessed to be the laird, hurrying up to him.

"Soldier!" cried Mr. Barclay, "I allow no one to go this way, so thou must turn thee back."

"She be sorry tat she has anghered her honor," said Ian bowing submissively, "but troth it be ower far a gate to gang back noo."

"Far gate or short gate, friend, back thou must go," said Mr. Barclay.

"Hoot na! she canna gang back," said Ian.

"But thou must go back, friend," said the laird.

"Troth, she wunna gang back," replied Ian.

"But thou must go back I tell thee," said the laird, "and if thou wilt not go back peaceably, I'll turn thee back whether with thy will or not."

"Hoot, toot, she no be fit to turn her back," said Ian with one of his broad good-humoured grins.

"I'll try," said the laird, laying his hands on Ian's shoulders to carry his threat into immediate execution.

"An she be for tat," said Ian, "let her lay doon her wallet, an' she'll see whuther she can gar her turn or no."

"By all means, good friend," said the laird, who enjoyed a thing of the kind beyond all measure. "Off with thy wallet, then. Far be it from me to to take any unseemly advantage of thee."

The wallet being quietly deposited on the ground, to it they went; but ere they had well buckled together, Ian put down the laird beside the wallet with the same ease that he had put down the wallet itself.

"Ha!" cried the laird, as much overcome with surprise at a defeat, which he had never before experienced, as he had been by the strength that had produced it. "Thou didst take me too much

o' the sudden, friend,—but give me fair play. Let me up and I will essay to wrestle with thee again."

"Weel, weel," said Ian coolly, "she may tak' her ain laizier to rise, for her nanesell has plenty o' sun afore her or night."

"Come on then," said Mr. Barclay, grappling again with his antagonist and putting forth all his strength, which Ian allowed him full time to exert against him, whilst in defiance of it all he stood firm and unshaken as a rock.

"Noo!—doon she goes again!" said Ian, deliberately prostrating the laird a second time, "an' gif tat be na eneugh, she'll put her toon ta tird time, sae tat she'll no need nae mair puttens toon."

"No, no," said the laird panting, and, notwithstanding his defeat, much delighted not only with the exercise he had had, but that he had at last discovered so potent an antagonist. "No, no, friend!—enough for this bout. I own that thou art the better man. This is the first time that my back was ever laid on the grass. Come away with me, good fellow, thou shalt go home with me."

Ian's journey was not of so pressing a nature as to compel him to refuse the laird's hospitable offer,

and he spent no less than fourteen days living on the fat of the land at Ury, and Mr. Barclay afterwards sent a man and horses with him to forward him a few stages on his way.

On his return to Strath-Connan, Ian was welcomed by many an old friend; and he speedily felt himself again rooted in his native soil. He soon re-edified his bothy; but he did so after that much improved and much more comfortable style of architecture, which his large experience of civilized life had now taught him to consider as essential. He again took readily to his caurets, and to the simple occupations attendant on the care and management of them, which he forthwith increased to a considerable extent by increasing their numbers; and every day he grew wealthier and wealthier by means of them. The taste which he had ever had of society, led him more frequently to visit the gayer and livelier scenes of the more thickly inhabited straths; and it was seldom that a market, a marriage, or a merry-making of any kind occurred, where Ian's sinewy limb and well turned ankles were not seen executing the Highland fling to a degree of perfection rarely to be matched. These innocent practices he continued

long after he was a husband and a father,—yea, until he was far advanced in life.

If Ian had a spark of pride at all, it was in the circumstance that the calves of his legs were so well rounded, that, however much his limbs might be exercised, they always kept up his hose without the aid of a garter, an appendage to his dress which he always scorned to wear. One night a large party of friends were assembled in his house to witness the baptism of a recently born grandson. After the ceremony and the feast were both over, the young people got up to dance, and, old as he was, Ian More Arrach was among the foremost of them. To it he went, and danced the Highland fling with his usual spirit and alacrity, snapping his fingers and shouting with the best of them. But alas! when the dance was over, he suddenly discovered that his hose had fallen three inches from their original position, betraying the sad fact, that his limbs had lost somewhat of their original muscle. This was to him a sad sinking in the barometer of human life. He surveyed his limbs for some time in silence with a melancholy expression; and then, with something like a feeling of bitterness, which

no one had ever seen take possession of him before, he exclaimed,—

"Tamm her nanesell's teeths!—She may weel gie ower ta fling, noo tat her teeths wunna haud up her hose!"

MORNING SCENE.

The shrill and persevering crow of a cock, who roosted on the rafters immediately over our heads, gradually succeeded in drawing up Grant and myself from the deep Lethean lake of slumber into which both had been plunged, and we arose yawning and most unwillingly from our simple couches, ere yet the sun had peeped above the horizon. With one consent we stole to the outer door in our dressing gowns and slippers, to inhale a few draughts of pure air, and to inform ourselves as to the state of the weather. A perfect calm prevailed, and the landscape was lying under one general sombre shadow, which made it so difficult to distinguish objects, that we could not even trace the exact line of boundary of the still waters of Loch-an-Dorbe.

One glow of an aurora hue made the summit of the opposite hill to gleam faintly, but that was enough to produce a corresponding fragment of bright reflection on the bosom of the lake. In the middle of that warm spot rested a little boat, with two men in it, one of whom was seated at the oars to keep it steady, whilst the other was standing in the stern, eagerly occupied in fishing.

GRANT, (*rubbing his eyes.*)—Can that possibly be Clifford.

AUTHOR.—Let us ascertain whether he is in his bed or not.

GRANT.—Aha! his *gite* is empty and cold! what an indefatigable fisherman!

AUTHOR.—Depend upon it we shall not see him here for some hours to come.

GRANT.—Then I shall employ the intervening time in repose.

AUTHOR.—And I shall follow your good example.

The very profound sleep into which we both of us sank, was at length interrupted by the return of Clifford with a beautiful dish of fresh trouts.

CLIFFORD.—You lazy fellows! See what a glorious morning's work I have had while you

have been snoring away like a couple of tailors. Look how large and how fine they are! There is one now, twice as big as any that was killed last night.

AUTHOR.—We are certainly greatly obliged to you for quitting your couch so early in order to procure us so luxurious a breakfast.

CLIFFORD.—I don't think that either of you deserve to share in it, though in truth you are already sufficiently punished for your indolence by missing the fine sport I have had; and therefore I shall act towards you with true Christian charity. Come then, my girl, get your fire up, and your frying-pan in order, and I'll stand cook.

GRANT.—You must have had a delicious morning of it.

CLIFFORD.—Charming! The effect of the sunrise on the lake was enchanting, and the jumping of the trouts around me perfectly miraculous.

GRANT.—I am surprised that you could tear yourself away so soon.

CLIFFORD.—I believe I should have been there for some hours to come, had not my barefooted boatman told me that it was time to get on shore, for that the clouds which we saw heaping them-

selves up to the westward, threatened to discharge a storm upon us.

GRANT.—I suspect that the fellow will turn out to be a true prophet. What a dreadful blast that was! Let us hurry out to witness the effects of it.

What a change had now taken place in the scene! The sun was already high above the horizon; but dense clouds hid his face from our view, and threw a deep inky hue over the whole face of nature, excepting only where the western blast took its furious course athwart the wide surface of the lake, lashing it up into white-crested billows, the sharp and fleeting lights of which acquired a double share of brilliancy amidst the general murky hue that prevailed everywhere around. The spray dashed over the island, and the grey towers of the castle. The flocks of sea-mews, kittywakes, and other waterfowl that frequented the ruined walls, were whirled about in confused mazes, like fragments of foam carried into the air, and were utterly unable to direct their flight by their own volition. Nothing could be more sudden nor more sublime than this effect! It was so grand, and at the same time so transient, that nothing but the ready eye and the matchless mind of the Reverend

John Thomson, of Duddingstone, our great Scottish Salvator, could have seized and embodied it. It passed away as speedily as it had come. A heavy shower of rain fell after it was gone; and after that had ceased, all was stillness and sunshine.

When we again set out to pursue our way, which led by the margin of the loch, its waters were rippling gently with every light zephyr that fanned them, and sparkling and glowing under the untamed rays of the broad sun, whilst the sea-birds were partly wheeling over the deep with all their wonted variety and regularity of evolution, and partly dipping into the water, and partly resting in buoyant repose upon its swelling bosom.

Having waved our last adieu to Loch-an-Dorbe from the summit of a knoll at some distance from the lower end of it, we took our course across the moorland, where the views on all sides were peculiarly dull and dreary. A black turf hut was now and then visible, proving that it was at least possible for human beings to live in this bare district; but all signs of cultivation were limited to a few wretched patches of arable ground lying along some of the small burns that here and there intersected the peat-mosses. Nothing could be more

miserable than the country, or than the humble dwellings of its natives; and yet even here we fell in with a picture of human felicity that strongly arrested our attention.

A group of ragged urchins were sporting on a little spot of greensward before the door of one of these hovels, and shouting and laughing loudly at their own fun. The youngest was mounted on a huge gaunt-sided sow, with a back as sharp as that of a saw; whilst two elder imps, one on either side, were holding him in his seat, and another was urging on the animal, by gently agitating the creature's tail. All this was done without cruelty, and in the best humour. The father and mother had been in the act of building up their next year's stock of peats into a stack, that rested against the weather gable of their dwelling, so that it might do the double duty of sheltering them from the prevailing blast, as well as furnishing them with food for their kitchen fire. But the merry scene that was passing below had become too touchingly attractive to the hearts of both the parents, and their labour was arrested in the most whimsical manner; for the man sat perched on all-fours on the top of the frail edifice he was engaged

in rearing, grinning with broad delight at the gambols of his half-naked progeny; and his wife's attention having been arrested whilst she was in the very act of tossing up an armful of the black materials of her husband's architecture, she still stood fixed like a statue, with her arm raised, quite unconscious of the inconvenience of her attitude, and entirely absorbed in her enjoyment of the spectacle, her whole countenance beaming with the maternal joy she felt, and giving way to sympathetic roars of merriment.

GRANT.—You see it is not in the power of poverty altogether to extinguish human happiness.

AUTHOR.—Nay, no more than riches can ensure it.

CLIFFORD.—How different the hard fortune of that poor creature, from the sunshiny lot of those women of quality and fashion whom we have seen figuring in fancy dresses, and glittering like dancing Golcondas, at Almacks; and yet how much more heart and honesty and true mirth there is in that rustic laugh of hers, than in all the hollow gaiety of that professed temple of pleasure.

AUTHOR.—This merry Maggy of the moor here

has indeed received but a small share of the good things of this life, compared with that which has been showered on the proud heads of those wealthy and titled exclusives. But individual happiness must not by any means be measured by the degree of wealth. And then, when we direct our thoughts to our prospects of happiness in a future life, and reflect how apt those favourites of fortune are to be led astray by that very abundance which has been heaped upon them here below, we cannot but congratulate Maggy there as having at least the safer, if not the better share of the treasures of this world.

GRANT.—True; and we have the authority of almost every moral poet, from Horace to our Scottish Allan Ramsay, for the great truth that even happiness in this world is to be more readily found in a comfortable middle state, than in either of the extremes,—

> "He that hath just enough can soundly sleep,
> The o'er-come only fashes folk to keep."

CLIFFORD.—Ha! ha! sermons and poetry for pilgrims in the desert! But then arises the

difficult question, what is it that constitutes that "*just enough*," which the poet holds to be the talisman of human happiness.

GRANT.—Give economy fair play, and it will make that talisman out of any thing.

AUTHOR.—And so, on the other hand, extravagance could never possess it, even if the subterranean treasures of Aladdin, or the diamond valley of Sinbad were to be placed at its disposal.

CLIFFORD.—Your allusion to the Arabian tales puts me in mind of our story-telling; and the subject we have now accidentally got upon, brings to my recollection a remarkable story which you once related to me, Grant.

GRANT.—You mean the legend of John Macpherson of Invereshie.

CLIFFORD.—The same. Pray tell it to our friend here.

GRANT.—If you, who have heard it before, have no objections to the repetition of it, I can have none to the telling of it.

THE LEGEND OF JOHN MACPHERSON OF INVERESHIE.

THE John Macpherson of whom I speak, lived in the very beginning of the seventeenth century. He was the same laird who is well known as having got the crown-charter of the lands of Invereshie. He was a tall handsome Highlander, with a somewhat melancholy cast of countenance. His manners were simple and unassuming, and though untaught by any instructor but nature, they were so much the reverse of vulgar, that they might have even been called elegant. He was warm in his affections, kind in his intercourse with all around him, extremely bold and determined in any difficult or desperate juncture, and resolute and stern in his purpose, when suddenly called on to deal with a matter of deep or stirring moment,

and farther,—though that belonged to him less as any thing peculiar, than as a characteristic of the time he lived in,—he was superstitiously alive to all those incidents or appearances that might chance to wear the semblance of ominous or fatal portent; and such as these did not unfrequently present themselves in days when the fables of Highland demonology reigned over the strongest minds with an absolute despotism.

Living, as Macpherson did, almost entirely among his native mountains, his time was very happily as well as prudently divided between the chase of the red-deer, in which he particularly delighted, and those attentions which he found it necessary to bestow on the concerns of his landed territory; in looking to the well-being of his people, and the health, prosperity, and multiplication of those large herds of cattle which spread themselves over the broad sides of his hills, and brushed through the ancient fir-forests or the birchen groves that shaded his glens. In this way his worldly means so increased, that he became an object of no inconsiderable solicitude to such of the neighbouring lairds and ladies as happened to have unmarried daughters; and so many were the fair

parties presented to his choice, that being attracted in all directions, he remained hanging, like a bunch of ripe grapes, in the fluctuating breezes of doubt and indecision, that threatened in time to dry and shrivel him up into an old bachelor.

Whilst Macpherson was still in this negative condition, he happened to visit the castle of a certain chief. The company were assembling in the great hall to wait for the banquet, and he stood ensconced within the deep recess of one of its antique windows, where he had vainly endeavoured to retreat from the assaults of some three or four most agreeable spinsters, who, being of a certain age, less scrupulously adopted measures which were much too bold for their younger rivals to have ventured upon. Having brought him to bay in a place whence he could not retreat without rudeness, each commenced the discharge of her own independent fire against him, whilst, at the same time, little spiteful shots of malice, both from their tongues and their eyes, were every now and then interchanged from one fair competitor to another. This scene was going on, much to the amusement of the spectators, but very much to the annoyance of the victim of this persecution, when a sudden buzz from

the company, directed Macpherson's attention to the door of the hall, where entered a lady of surprising beauty and grace of mien. By a natural impulse, which he could neither explain nor command, Macpherson burst unceremoniously from among his tormentors, and stepped forward to gaze upon her as she moved easily up the hall. The intelligent eyes of the lovely stranger fell upon him, and fixed themselves upon him with a species of fascination which touched him to the soul. He was sensibly conscious of the resistless power of this influence, but at the same time he felt that it was a fascination of much too agreeable a nature for him to allow himself to struggle against it. He at once abandoned his heart to all its ecstasies, as a thirsty fly would yield itself up to the delicious temptation of quaffing the nectar from the cup of some beauteous and fragrant flower; and he gazed on her face with a rapture which he had never before experienced. Nor was all this very surprising, for she who thus attracted him had been born and educated in the metropolis,—had even mixed in the gay and splendid scenes of a court, and her dress and manners lent so dazzling an air to the lustre of her natural charms, that, compared to her,

the native beauties congregated from all parts of the vast strath of the Spey, fresh and lovely, graceful and intelligent, as fame has ever held its ladies to be, appeared before her as so many dim and feeble fixed stars in the path of some brilliant and glorious planet.

Invereshie's natural modesty made him shrink from asking for that very introduction for which his whole heart burned. But the lady was the niece of his host; she had recently arrived with the intention of residing with him for some months, and the introduction came in the ordinary course of etiquette. He was seated by her during the greater part of that evening. Something more than mortal as she at first appeared to be in his eyes, he soon found, on a nearer approach, that she had nothing about her either overawing or repulsive. He listened to her syren tongue with an eagerness which until then had been quite a stranger to him. The hours flew like minutes. He suddenly perceived that every guest was gone but himself. He hurried away in confusion, and rode home in a delirium of delight so perfectly novel to him, that he two or three times seriously questioned himself by the way, whether reason was still

really holding her dominion over his brain, and the continual presence of the lady's image there, almost convinced him that she had usurped the throne of that judicious goddess.

Macpherson was soon drawn back to the castle of his friend, by an attraction which was quite irresistible. The impression made upon him by a first acquaintance, was powerfully strengthened by a second meeting,—a third and a fourth visit soon succeeded,—and their interviews became more and more frequent, as he began to perceive, with a certain air of triumph, that his attentions, offered at first with becoming deference, were much more graciously received than those which came from any of his brother lairds. His hunting expeditions became less numerous, and even his wonted prudential daily superintendance of his rural concerns gave way to a new and much more seductive occupation. He gradually became almost a constant inmate in his friend's castle. But, in devoting so much of his time to attendance on her who had thus gained so overwhelming a dominion over his heart, he consoled himself for this unusual neglect of his affairs, by reflecting, that the prize he coveted was so rare as to be universally considered be-

yond all price,—a gem far richer than any of those that adorned his brooch; and that besides all its glitter and sparkle, it was not without considerable intrinsic value also, seeing, that in addition to her other advantages, the lady's *tocher* was such as might well satisfy a much more avaricious man than he knew himself to be.

As for the lady, I have only to say of her, that she was a woman. There are few of the fair sex whose bosoms have not been visited by a certain spirit of romance at one period or other, and, indeed, it may be matter of doubt, whether those who have altogether escaped from this visitation are much to be envied. It is that which makes many a town-bred girl sigh for love and a cottage, until such fancies are extinguished by maturer judgment. The soul of her of whom I speak had been deeply imbued with this poetry of life, and as yet she had seen no good reason for ridding herself of it. She was all enthusiasm. Invereshie's gay white tartan—his plumed bonnet and jewelled ornaments—his gallant, though unobtrusive, bearing—his firm tread and independent gait—the resolute and heroic character that sat upon his brow, and yielded a calm illumination to his pensive eye

—and, above all, the enchanting scenery of his river —the sparkling Feshie—its wild glen, and the prospective witchery of a Highland life, painted as it was with all the glowing colours of her fervid fancy, and with a thousand adventitious attractions which that fancy threw around it, had conspired to do as much execution on her heart, as her manifold charms had wrought upon his. The visions of town gaiety and grandeur, which had hitherto filled her young mind, speedily melted away. Rural circumstances, and rural imagery occupied it entirely. She suddenly became fond of moonlight walks—of wandering on the banks of the magnificent river that wound majestically through the wide vale, where she then resided—and of musing amid the chequered shadows which evening threw over the ruins of an ancient chapel and a burial-ground, embraced by one bold and beautiful sweep of the stream at no great distance from the castle.

She was one night seated on a grey moss-covered stone, one of the many frail memorials of the dead which were scattered through this retired spot, her eyes now lifted in admiration of the glorious orb that silently held its way through the skies above, and now thrown downwards to its

image then trembling in the mimic heaven then floating on the broad bosom of the stream below, when Invereshie, who had been called away by some express affair, was returning at a late hour to the castle. These were times, be it again remembered, when superstition held all mankind under her thral, and when the boldest Highlander, who would have fearlessly rushed on death in the battle field, would have quailed before the idle phantoms of his own imagination.

Invereshie's nurse had early embued his mind with a firm faith in all the wildest of these imaginings, and with him this belief, then so common to all, had grown with his growth, and strengthened with his strength. The horse that he rode started aside and snorted with affright, when, on bursting from the deep shade of the grove that partly embosomed the burial-ground, he first saw the white figure of the lady before him; and it argued a more than common courage in the horseman, therefore, that he should have checked the flight of the terrified animal, in order to ascertain the nature of the object he beheld. The moonbeams shone fully and clearly on a face which he could not for a moment mistake; yet their pale light shed so chilling and

unearthly a lustre over its well-known features, that, taken in combination with the hour and the place, it made him hesitate for a moment whether he really beheld the form of her whom he so much loved, or whether that which presented itself to him was one of those unsubstantial appearances which he believed evil spirits had power to assume for the bewilderment and destruction of mortals. But the sound of the trampling of his horse's hoof had fallen upon the lady's ear while it was yet afar off; as it drew nearer, the fluttering of her heart had whispered to her that it was Invereshie who came; and ere he had recovered from his surprise, she arose and saluted him in that voice which had now become as music to his ear. His blood, chilled and arrested as it had for a moment been by superstitious dread, now went dancing to his heart in a rushing tide of joy. He sprang from his horse, and eagerly availing himself of so favourable an opportunity, where all eyes but those of God were absent, he made a full and animated confession of his passion; and that little solitary field of the dead, which had been accustomed for so many ages to scenes of woe and bereavement alone, was now once more doomed to witness the pure effu-

sions of two as happy hearts as had ever been united together before its neighbouring altar, now so long dilapidated.

"Macpherson!" said the lady, with that enthusiasm which so strongly characterised her, "never forget this solemn hour and place, and let the image of that bright moon be ever in your memory; for it has witnessed your vows, and beheld thee pledge thyself to me for ever!"

"Never! never can I forget it, lady!" replied Invereshie, with a depth of feeling equal to her own.

"Tis well!" said the lady. "And now it were better to shun the observation of prying eyes. This private converse of ours, at the witching hour of night, when none but spirits of the moon are abroad, might be misinterpreted. We must part here!" And ere he wist, she had disappeared among the brushwood.

"The witching hour of night!" muttered Invereshie to himself, as he stood rivetted to the spot, overpowered by the surprise in which he was left by the strange and sudden manner in which she had vanished from his sight. There was something, he thought, marvellous and supernatural in

it. His eyes wandered round the silent churchyard, where he had found her seated. A thousand superstitious tales connected with that spot rushed upon his memory. It was there that in popular belief the wicked spirit of the waters often appeared to bewilder lated travellers, and to lure them to their destruction. He thought of the power which evil beings were supposed to have in re-animating the remains of the dead, or of thrusting forth human souls from their earthly habitations, in order that they might themselves become the tenants of the fairest and most angelic forms. His reason and his judgment were in vain opposed to these terrific phantoms of the brain.

"The witching hour of night!" groaned he deeply.

The hand which he had but a moment before so warmly pressed, and which had sent a fever of joy through every fibre of his frame, now seemed to have conveyed to him an icy chillness, that ran through every vein till it froze his very heart; and as he hurriedly, and almost unconsciously mounted his horse, to prosecute his way towards the castle, his mind was perplexed and tortured by strange and mysterious doubts and misgivings, which con-

tinued to haunt both his waking and his sleeping dreams during the remainder of that eventful night.

But as the dawn of morning swept away the fogs which hung upon the mountain-tops, so did it dissipate the gloomy visions which had thus for a few hours shrouded the lofty soul of Invereshie. Reason resumed her judgment-seat, and a little calm reflection brought a blush of shame into his cheek, occasioned by what he was now disposed to believe to have been his own weakness. Every manly feeling within him was aroused. Arraying himself in his richest attire, he sought for an audience of his friend the chief, and readily gained from him an uncle's and a guardian's consent to his union with her to whom his vows of love had been so recently plighted. Overjoyed at Invereshie's disclosure, the chief led him to the great hall, at that time thronged with guests, and having taken his seat to preside over the morning's meal, he called for a grace cup, and drinking to the health of the happy pair, he publicly announced the alliance which had been that morning agreed on.

All eyes were instantly turned on her to whom the flowing goblet had been so joyfully drained.

But whether it was from the sudden swelling of those emotions, naturally enough arising from this public declaration, or whether it was owing to some fortuitous cause, altogether unconnected with what was then passing, no one could say,—but, whatever might be the cause, her brilliant eyes had become fixed and glazed, the roses had fled from her cheeks, and she fell gently back in her chair, her lovely features exhibiting the ghastly hue of death. A chill shudder came over Invereshie's heart. Pushing back the seat in which he sat, he gazed with horror upon the spectacle before him. Again was his mind unmanned, and a vision of the unearthly appearance which the lady had presented to him when he first beheld her seated among the graves beneath the moonlight of the previous night, rushed upon his imagination. Overpowered by his feelings, he remained as if unconscious of what was passing around him. Nor was he at all observed amidst the general panic. The women shrieked, the guests arose in confusion, they crowded around the lady, and she was borne off to her apartment by the attendants.

For several hours the lady lay on her couch so perfectly exanimate, that every individual in the

castle believed that she was dead, and mournful preparations were begun to be made for the funereal obsequies of her in whose animating smiles they had so recently rejoiced, and in whose bridal festivities they had anticipated that they were so soon to participate. Eloquent was the silence of that grief which reigned everywhere within the walls, unbroken save by the sobbing of those who hung around the couch of her who had already lived long enough among them to have gained the hearts of all who had approached her. But ere long it happily gave way to unrestrained joy; for, to the amazement of her attendants, the warm blush of life gradually began to revisit her cheeks, —the heaving of her bosom gently returned,—her eye-lids slowly unsealed themselves,—the pulse resumed its former action,—the tide of life speedily carried renewed vigour into every limb,—her eyes regained their wonted brightness,—and, to the unspeakable surprise and delight of every one, she returned to the hall with a light and airy step, and with a sensible accession to her usual gaiety of heart, apparently resulting from its temporary slumber.

But hers was a gaiety that touched no respon-

sive chords in Macpherson's bosom. He had stood as it were appalled a motionless spectator of the various wonderful changes which had been so strangely produced upon her; and he remained for some time sunk in silent abstraction, ill befitting an ardent lover, who had thus had his soul's idol so miraculously restored to him from the very jaws of the grave. Those who were about him marvelled and whispered together. But his moody musings were quickly overcome by the lady's enchanting voice of gladness. The laughing sunshine that darted from her eyes soon dissipated those sombre clouds that overshadowed his brow. He again became the willing slave of every word and glance that fell from her. The fascination under which he was held increased every moment; and not many days went by ere the Laird of Invereshie, surrounded by a great gathering of his clansmen and followers, and proudly riding by her bridle-rein, led her home as his bride to the blithe sound of the bagpipe.

As he approached the mansion of his fathers, Invereshie was met by crowds of women and children and old men, who thronged about the cavalcade with eager curiosity to behold their future

lady, whom they greeted with shouts of gratulation that suffused her lovely cheek with blushes of joy, and flushed her husband's brow with a pride which he had never felt before. An event so interesting to all his dependants had made even the most aged and infirm to leave their humble dwellings. Some of those who had come from great distances were mounted on the shaggy little horses common to the country. The creatures were caparisoned in the rudest and most characteristic manner; and they formed many picturesque groupes, which every now and then called forth expressions of surprise and delight from her who was the fair cause of their assemblage. One of these was peculiarly striking.

Under an old twisted mountain ash stood a ragged red-headed boy, holding the withy that served as a halter to a pony, whose bones, exhibiting many an angle beneath his rough white skin, shewed that he had arrived at an age but rarely reached by any of his long-lived race. From either side of the wooden saddle that filled his hollow back, hung a huge pannier of the coarsest kind of wicker work, and from each of these arose the plaided head and pale parchment features of

an old woman. So very withered were these ancient crones, that, worn down and weak as was the animal that bore them, their wasted frames seemed scarcely to add any thing, in his estimation, to the weight of the baskets that contained them. There was something, at first sight, indescribably ludicrous in the picture they presented; and the bride, who was by no means insensible to such emotions, could not resist giving way for an instant to the laughter which it excited in her as she drew near to them. It so happened that the line of march of the procession brought her close past the tree under which these strange figures were stationed. No sooner had she come opposite to it, than one of them, remarkable for the length of her grey elf-like locks, which streamed from beneath the uncouth *mutch* that covered her head, reared herself up from amidst the heap of tartan stuff that enveloped her person. Stretching out her bare and skeleton arm, her red and gummy eye-lids expanded themselves so as to bring fully into action a pair of piercing black eyes, that flashed with a fire which even extreme age had been unable to tame, and which now lent a fearful animation to her otherwise spectral features.

She glared into the lady's face with a fixed gaze and a wild expression that blenched her cheek, and at once banished every thing like mirth or joy from her bosom. In vain did the lady try to avert her eyes from an object which was now to her terrific,—they seemed as if enchained to it by a power like that of the basilisk; and to add to her misery, some accidental obstacle created at that very moment a stop in their onward march. Anxiously did she wish to have taken refuge in conversation with her husband, but he was just then employed in replying to the warm compliments of some humble well-wisher, who addressed him from the opposite side of the way. Meanwhile the bony and toothless jaws of the old woman seemed to be moved by a temporary palsy, created by her anxiety to utter something which the lady dreaded to hear. But her very eagerness apparently deprived her of the power of speech; for though her skinny lips were seen to move, no sound proceeded from them except an inarticulate muttering, the import of which was lost amidst the din and bustle of the crowd. But although the lady gathered not the sense, the lurid lightnings that shot from [illegible] miserable looking wretch, told her that the [illegible] words they

were, could have conveyed no prayer of benediction. A sudden failure of nature came over the lady, and she must have dropped from her saddle to the ground, had not her husband's attention been recalled to her at that moment by the renewal of the onward movement of the march. Altogether unconscious of what had caused this apparent faintness, nor indeed being quite aware of the full extent of it, his arm was ready to uphold her. Her vital spirits rallied at his touch. She recovered her seat, and then calling his attention to the object of her alarm, who was by this time left some short way behind them,

"Tell me," said she, "tell me, I entreat thee, who is that fearful looking old woman under yonder tree?"

"That," replied he, "is my old nurse Elspeth Macpherson, one who is believed by all to be gifted with more than mortal powers."

"Her eye is indeed terrible!" replied the lady, shuddering.

"Why shouldst thou be afraid of her?" said Macpherson, in a graver tone. "She can never be terrible to thee! Great as her wisdom and great as her powers undoubtedly are, they can

never come to me or to mine but to succour and to bless. From my cradle upwards hath she been as a guardian spirit to me, averting all misfortunes that might have assailed me; and, twined as thy future fate now is with mine, my love," continued he, with a forced smile, "trust me, dearest, that her searching eye will be continually over it and on it."

An involuntary tremor seized the lady at the very thought of her fate being under the control of an eye, the piercing and unfriendly influence of which was still so strong upon her mind. She forbore to reply; but she could not exclude a train of very unpleasant reflections, which even the rapidly succeeding circumstances of the gay Highland pageant, in which she performed so prominent a part, failed for a while in removing. For some time, too, her husband rode by her side wrapped up in silence and abstraction, till rousing himself from what appeared to be a dreaming fit, he addressed to her some kind expressions, which fell on her soul like balm, and by degrees regaining her wonted cheerfulness, she at length rode onwards distributing sunshine and sweetness on all sides, in return for the many warm welcomes that

were showered on her, till she was finally lifted from her saddle, at the door of her future home, by the nervous arm of the enraptured Invereshie, amidst the deafening shouts of his friends and retainers.

Invereshie's hospitable board was spread with more than its usual liberality on this joyful occasion; and, according to the custom of the time, its feast and revelry endured for many days. As his lady's previous nurture and education had accustomed her to much nicety of domestic arrangement, and to many luxuries then altogether unknown in the Highlands, he exerted himself to the utmost to lessen the disagreeable effect of that change which he was conscious she must experience on her first entrance into his family. He strove to anticipate every wish; and when he had failed in anticipating her wishes, he spared neither pains nor expense to gratify them the moment she had breathed them. He procured comforts and rarities of all sorts from great distances, and at a cost which he would have considered most alarming, had he not trusted that it would cease with the departure of the guests who thronged his house to welcome his newly married wife. But time wore

on, and the lady seemed to have no inclination to get rid of either.

There is a prudent and useful old saying—"begin with a wife as you mean to end with her." It would have been well for Macpherson that he had acted upon this principle. Instead of boldly bringing down his lady's ideas at once to that pitch which would have been in rational harmony with his own habits, as well as with his circumstances, to which her strong attachment to him would have most probably insured her ready submission, he had himself done all in his power to give a false colour to things, which he now felt it a very delicate and difficult matter to attempt to remove. Meanwhile, she went innocently enough on in obedience to that bent which her education had given her, in the full persuasion that she was only doing that which her duty, as his wife, prescribed to her. Yielding to her resistless importunity and attractions, the neighbouring gentry were drawn around her, as if by some magic spell; and many of them became, in a manner, domesticated at her husband's hearth. Then every succeeding day brought to the old house some new friend from afar, whom she had been striving to make acquaint-

ed with that man of whom she was so proud, and to whom her whole heart was now devoted, that she might prove how much she had gained by relinquishing the world for a prize so inestimable; and for the entertainment of persons so cultivated as these were, it naturally followed that more refined schemes of pleasure and amusement were devised, which, whilst they gratified Invereshie at the time, by exciting universal admiration at the tasteful genius of his lady who had conceived them, made him afterwards wince at the large and repeated demands which were made on his treasury, for purposes altogether foreign to the whole pursuits of his former life, and which the whole tenor of it had led him to consider as vain and unprofitable. He wondered that her ingenuity could be so enduring, and still comforting himself with the hope that each particular instance of it that occurred must necessarily be the last, he was still doomed to be astonished every succeeding day by new and yet more expensive projects. Amidst all this bustle and occupation, her speech was ever of the delights of her HIGHLAND SOLITUDE, as she called their residence, whilst her thoughts seemed to be unceasingly employed in endeavours to invent

means of depriving it of all claim to any such title, by filling it with as large a portion as she could of the gay crowd and vanities of a city. Of all these vanities none were so galling to the honest heart of Invereshie, as the arrival of a certain knot of gallant rufflers from the court—men of broad hats jauntingly cocked to one side, and balanced by long feathers of various hues—who flaunted it in silken cloaks, and strutted it in long-piked shoes; all of which, in his eyes, seemed to sort but ill with the manly Celtic garb worn by himself and his Highland friends. But much as it irked him to be compelled to receive such popinjays as these, and irritated as he frequently was by their unblushing impudence, he submitted calmly to that which the rules of hospitality dictated, and even repressed all outward appearance of his dissatisfaction; and he was rendered the more ready to impose this restraint on himself, by the reflection, that most of these gay gallants were in some way or other related to or connected with his wife; and he felt that, as her kinsmen or friends, they claimed the full extent of a Highland welcome. But these southern summerfly cousins were no sooner gone than they were succeeded by clouds of fresh and

yet more thirsty insects of the same genus; and these tormentors not only contributed, in their own persons, largely to augment the consumption of those luxuries which had been so recently introduced into his house, and to the promotion of those extravagancies which were conceived and executed more especially for their amusement; but the more simple natives of the glens also were soon taught by their infectious example to relish them quite as much as they did.

Invereshie was long silent under all this; but he did not suffer the less deeply in secret on that account. The ardent love with which he adored his wife, and that certain mistaken chivalrous notion of delicacy, which has been already noticed as operating so strongly on his feelings, long prevented him from attempting to restrain the expenses of so fascinating a woman, who had brought him money enough to furnish at least some apology for the expenditure she occasioned. But ample as her *tocher* had once appeared to him, he soon began to see that it was melting rapidly away under those immense drains which she was daily applying to it; and at length, with more of love than of chiding in his tone, he ventured to speak to her

on the painful subject which had so long oppressed him. But alas! whilst he did speak to her, her very eye unmanned him,—and what he did bring himself to say was couched in terms so gentle and so general, as neither to convey to her any very useful or impressive lesson, nor even any very definite idea of the extent to which she had erred. The lady flung her snowy arms around his neck —bedewed his face with her tears, and made many earnest and sincere protestations, all of which she sincerely intended most sacredly to fulfil. Macpherson was enraptured. He blamed himself for what he called his severity—kissed away the precious drops from her eyes with a more than ordinary glow of affection. They were the happiest pair in the universe—and in a few days her extravagance was going on at its usual rapid pace, whilst she was all the while in the most perfect belief that she was giving the fullest attention to his wishes.

Many were the scenes of this description that afterwards, from time to time, took place between Invereshie and his lady. The kind of life into which he was now so unwittingly and unwillingly plunged, allowed him few moments for sober reflection. But when such moments did occur, they

were bitter ones indeed. At such times gloomy and harrowing recollections, and dreadful and appalling doubts would steal over his soul, putting his very reason to flight before them,—and his flesh would creep, and his hair would bristle, whilst his mind was thus yielding to its own speculative misgivings as to the mysterious nature of that fascination which could thus drag him on to certain ruin in despite of his own better judgment. But resolute as was his natural character, and deep as were his determinations at such times, they were all put to flight at once by the first bewitching love-glance of his lady's eye.

Things had gone on in this way for months, growing worse and worse every day, when Invereshie, oppressed by that gloom, which now clung more frequently and more closely to him, set out one morning very early to join some of his neighbours in a distant chase of the deer. He was that day more than usually successful; and his attenddants having been left behind to bring home the spoils, he was compelled to return in the evening alone. The sun was getting low as he came down into the upper part of his own deep and precipitous Glen Feshie, and the shaggy faces of its eastern

mountains were broadly lighted up by its rays, thus rendering the crags on its western side, and the shadows they threw across the wooded bottom, doubly obscured by the blazing contrast. As the laird advanced, he came suddenly in view of a cottage, perched on the summit of a little knoll, and sheltered by one huge twisted and scathed pine alone, the bared limbs of which permitted the spot to be gladdened by a lingering sunbeam, to which the dense forest that surrounded it forbade all entrance elsewhere. This was the habitation of his nurse, whose strange appearance has been already described. She and the old crone her sister, who was believed to be scarcely less gifted than herself, were seated on settles at the door, availing themselves of what yet remained of the glowing light to twine a thrifty thread with distaff and spindle. The laird seldom passed this way without visiting old Elspeth; and on this occasion he turned from his direct path the more readily, because his conscience accused him that he had somewhat neglected her of late. The continual round of dissipation in which he had been for some time whirled, had not permitted him once to see her since that accidental [illegible] her on

the day she appeared at his marriage pageant. On that occasion, too, he felt that she should have been a guest at that table where his humbler friends were entertained; but he remembered that although she had been invited, she did not appear. The recollection of that joyous day shot across his mind like the gleaming lightning of a summer night, only to be succeeded by a deeper gloom arising from the recurrence of all that had passed since. Unperceived by the frail owners of the cottage, he wound his way towards it with a sinking heart. In approaching it, he was compelled by the nature of the ground to make a half circuit around the knoll, which thus brought him up in rear of it; and he was about to discover himself to the two old women, by turning the angle of the gable of the little building, when his steps were almost unconsciously arrested by hearing his own name pronounced, and he halted for a moment. It was his nurse who was speaking to her sister emphatically and energetically in Gaelic; and that which he heard, might have been nearly interpreted thus:—

"Och hone, Invereshie!" exclaimed she in a shrill tone of lament, as if she had been apostrophizing him in his own presence. "Och hone!

what but the black art of hell itself could have so cast the glamour o'er thee, my bonny bairn, that thou should'st sit and see thy newly-chartered hills and glens melt from thy grasp as calmly and silently as yonder pine-clad rock beholds the sunshine creep away from its bosom, and never once come to seek counsel as thou were wont from these lips which never lied to thine ear."

"Witchcraft!" muttered her sister; "wicked witchcraft is at work with him."

"Witchcraft!" cried the nurse with an emotion so violent as fearfully to agitate her whole frame; "witchcraft, said ye? The prince of darkness is himself at work with him. The foul fiend, in a woman's form, is linked to him. Bethink thee of her moonlight wanderings by the waters,—her unhallowed midnight orgies among the graves of the dead, where they say she is still seen to walk while he is sleeping,—her sudden death, for death it was, on that ill-starred morning which proclaimed their union,—the strange reanimation of the corpse by the foul fiend that now possesses it,—the momentary sinking, and terror, and confusion of that wicked spirit when he quailed before the gaze of mine own gifted eye, shot from beneath the shade of

the spell-dispersing rowan-tree;—bethink thee of these things, sister Marion, and wonder not that mine unwilling lips should have been urged to mutter a curse, where my heart would have fain poured forth a blessing."

"I saw, I saw," replied the other crone, "thine eye was, indeed, then most potently gifted, sister, and thy will was not thine own."

"Och hone, och hone!" wailed out the nurse again, "that I should live to see my soul's darling thus rent away from the care of heaven, handed over to the powers of hell, and doomed to destruction both here and hereafter! Och hone, willingly would I give my worthless life if I could yet save him! Och hone, if I could but pour my burning words into his ear, so that his eyes might be opened, and that he might stent his heart strings to the stern work of his own salvation."

The unhappy laird had already heard enough. He felt as if the deadly juice of upas had found its way into his veins. His whole frame was, as it were, paralyzed. He leaned against the gable of the cottage for some moments, during which he was almost unconscious of thought or of existence; and then, with his limbs failing under him, he stag-

gered, giddy and confused, down the side of the knoll into the pathway below, and sank exhausted upon a mossy bank, where he lay for a time in a state nearly approaching to insensibility. Starting up at last with an unnatural effort which he had no reason left to guide, and regardless of all pathway, he hurried along by the brink of the stream with a fury as wild as that which impelled its rushing waters. Slackening his pace by degrees, as his bewildered recollection began to return to him, he at length stopped, and resting against a rock, his scattered thoughts returned thickly upon him. At first he resolved to go back to hold converse with his nurse, but ere he had well conceived this idea, he rejected it as an idle waste of time; for the fresh recurrence to his recollection of all she had uttered flashed conviction too strongly on his mind to render any farther question necessary. Those dark and mysterious doubts which had so long tortured him from time to time during his moody musings, now reared themselves into one gigantic, horrible, and overwhelming certainty, to dwell on which, even for an instant, filled him with an agony that brought large drops of cold perspiration to his brow. His jaws chattered

came on his ears whilst he was yet above a bow-shot off,—an arrow itself could not have rent his heart more cruelly. He flew forward, and brushing almost unnoticed through the crowd of serving-men in gay attire that obstructed his entrance, he sought a lonely chamber, where, in darkness and in silence, he sat brooding over his misery, and nursing the terrible purpose that possessed him. Every now and then his soul was stung to madness by the shouts of mirth, the music, and the other sounds of jollity which, from time to time, arose from the festal-hall below, until, unable longer to bear the torture he suffered, he rushed forth again into the woods. There he wandered for some hours to and fro, torn by his contending passions; for love was still powerful within him, and would, even yet, often rise up for a time to wrestle hard with the wizard Superstition who had now so irrecoverably entangled and bemeshed his judgment. But ever as the recurrence of the tender emotion was felt within him, he summoned up his sterner nature to exorcise it forth as something unholy. At length the broad moon arose,—lighted up the hold front of the lofty Craigmigavie,—spread its beams over the far-stretched surface of Loch

against each other, and a cold shudder ran through his whole system, like that which precedes the last shiver of death. Again, a burning fever seized his brain, and he struck his forehead with the palm of his hand, and he wept and groaned aloud. Relieved by this sudden burst of affliction, he started from his resting-place, and knocking violently on his breast, as if to summon up all of man that was yet left within him,

"Invereshie!" cried he, addressing himself in unconscious soliloquy, "Invereshie! where is thy boasted resolution? Whither hath thy courage fled? But it shall come to thee now!" said he, setting his teeth together, and clenching his hands. "Hah! nor mortal nor demon shall keep me in this unhallowed state of enchantment, if it be in the power of fire or of water to break the spell. Let me think," said he again, striking his forehead, as if to rouse up his sharpest intellect; and then after a pause, during which he strode for a few turns backwards and forwards beneath the deep shadow of the rock, "I have it!" he exclaimed, and he urged on his steps with reckless haste towards his home.

The distant murmurs of its mirth and its revelry

Inch,—shed a pale lustre on the distant Craigou, the Macpherson's watch-hill,—and fully illuminated the wild scenery and the sparkling waters of the Feshie, and the noble birches that wept over its roaring rapids, and its deep and pellucid pools.

It is not for me to say what were these mysterious associations which came over the mind of Invereshie as he beheld the ample disk of the glorious luminary arise over the mountain top, and launch itself upward to hold its silent and undisturbed way through the immensity of etherial space. They seemed to bring an artificial calm to his bosom. But it was the calm of a mind irrevocably wound up to a determined purpose. And now, with his arms folded with convulsive tightness over his breast, as if to prevent the possibility of that purpose escaping thence, he stalked with a steady and resolute step towards the house.

It was now midnight. The revelry which had raged within its walls was silent, and the guests, wearied with the feast and the dance, and the tired servants, were alike buried in sleep. John of Invereshie stole to his lady's chamber. She, too, had retired to rest, and that deep and quiet sleep which results from purity and innocence of soul

had shed its balm upon her pillow. Her lamp was extinguished, but the moonbeams shone full through the casement directly on the bed where her beautiful form was disposed, and touched her lovely features with the pale polished glaze of marble. Had it not been for her long dark eye-lashes, and those raven ringlets that, escaping from their confinement, had strayed over her snowy neck, she might, in very deed, have been mistaken for some exquisitely sculptured monumental figure. For one moment Invereshie's purpose was shaken. But it was for one moment only; for as memory brought back to him the lonely churchyard,—her appeal to the moon,—the mysterious events that followed their nocturnal meeting, and all those after circumstances which had combined to produce that awful and to him infallible judgment which accident had led him to hear his old nurse pronounce, his dread purpose became firmly restored to his mind. He stretched forth his hand and griped the wrist of the delicately moulded arm that lay upon her bosom. The lady awoke in alarm; but instantly recognising her husband, her fears were at once tranquillized, and, springing from her recumbent posture, she threw herself [illegible] Surprised

thus unexpectedly into her embrace, Invereshie stood silent and motionless. Love thrilled through every fibre with one last expiring effort. Aware of the potency of its influence over his heart, he threw his eyes upwards, and,—ignorant and unhappy man!—blinded by the dark and bewildering mists of the wild superstition that had dominion over him, he actually prayed to heaven to give him power to go through with his work; and then, with a fixed composure, gained from that fancied aid which he imagined he was thus experiencing, he calmly and quietly turned to the lady.

"Dost thou see yonder moon?" said he; "never was there sky so fair, or scene so glorious. The night, too, is soft and balmy.—Say, will ye wander forth with me a little while to note how the eddies of the Feshie are distilled into liquid silver by her beams?"

"Let me but wrap me in my robe and my velvet mantle, and I will forth with you with good will," replied the lady, quite overjoyed to be thus gratified by her husband in the indulgence of her romantic propensity for such walks. "How kind in you, my love, to think thus of my fancies when rest must be so needful for you." And having

hastily protected her person from the night air, she slipped her arm within her husband's, and with a short light step, that but ill accorded with the solemn and funereal stride of him on whom she leaned, she tripped with him down stairs and across the dewy lawn.

"It is, indeed, a most glorious scene!" exclaimed the enraptured lady. "But, in truth, thou saidst not well, Invereshie, in saying, that never was there sky so fair or scene so glorious." Then smiling in his face, and sportively kissing his cheek, she innocently added, "I trust thou art no traitor."

"Traitor!" exclaimed Invereshie, with a sudden start that might have betrayed him to any one less unsuspicious.

"Aye, traitor in very deed!" replied the lady laughing. "Traitor truly art thou if thou can'st forget the lonely churchyard where you bound yourself to me for ever, and that broad moon which then shed over us her *magic influence!*"

"*Magic influence!*" groaned Invereshie in a deep and hollow tone of anguish.

"Alas! are you unwell, my dearest?" earnestly exclaimed his anxious and affectionate wife. "I

fear you have already done too much to-day; and your kindness to me would make thee thus expose thyself when thou wouldst most need repose. See yonder dark cloud, too, pregnant with storm. Look how it careers towards the moon; might not one fancy that some demon of the air bestrode it? Had we not better return to bed? Thou art not well, my love. Come, come, let us return."

"No!" replied Invereshie, in a tone calculated to disguise his feelings as much as possible. "I shall get better in the air. A sickness—a slight sickness only—a little farther walk will rid me of my malady."

The lady said no more; and Invereshie walked onwards with a slow, firm, but somewhat convulsive step, treading through the chequered wood by a path that wound among green knolls covered with birches of stupendous growth, and that led them to the rocky banks of the Feshie. There they reached a crag that projected over a deep and rapid part of the stream. Its waves were dancing in all the glories of that silver light which they borrowed from the bright luminary that still rode sublimely within a pure haven in the lowering sky, its brilliancy increased by contrast with

the dense, and pitchy, and portentous cloud that came sailing sublimely down upon it, like a huge winged continent.

"Invereshie!" cried the lady, her feelings strongly excited by the grandeur and beauty of the scene; and bursting forth in rapturous ecstacy, "do we not seem like the beings of another world as we stand on this giddy point, with the moon thus pouring out upon us all its potent enchantment?"

"Now God and Jesu be my guides but I will try thine enchantment!" cried Invereshie.

Steeling up his heart to the deed, and nerving his muscular arms to the utmost, he lifted the light and sylph-like form of his lady. One piercing shriek burst from her as he poised her aloft,—a benighted traveller heard it at a distance, crossed himself, and hurried onwards with trembling limbs,—and ere the lady had uttered another scream, Invereshie had thrown her, like a breeze-borne snow-wreath, far amid the bosom of the waves. The wretched man bent forward from the rock, his fingers clenched, his teeth set together, and his eyeballs stretching after the object which his hands had but just parted with.

"Holy Virgin, she floats!" cried he as he beheld her, by the light of the moonbeam, playing on the ripple that followed her form as it was hurried down the stream, supported by her widespread mantle.

"Help! oh help!—my love!—my lord!—'twas madness!—'twas accident!—but oh! mercy and save me!—save, or I am lost for ever!"

"She floats!" hoarsely muttered Invereshie, drawing his breath rapidly, and with a croaking sound in his throat, that spoke the agonizing torture he was enduring. "Ha! she floats! by Saint Mary then was the old woman right! Ha! she struggles at yonder tree!" He sprang from the rock to the margin of the stream, and scrambled towards the spot whither the eddy had whirled the already sinking lady. She had caught with a death-grasp by one frail twig of an alder sapling, though her strength was fast failing. Invereshie's eyes glared over her face as her head and her long dripping hair half emerged from the water.

"Help!—oh, save!—oh, help! was now all she could faintly utter, whilst her expiring look fixed itself upon her husband.

"Help, saidst thou? thou canst well help thy-

self by thy foul enchantments!" cried Invereshie. "Blessed Saint Michael be mine aid!—thou hadst well nigh taken from me my all, fiend that thou art,—thou may'st e'en take that twig with thee, too!" and drawing from his belt his *skian-dhu*, he sternly divided the sapling at its very root. As it parted from its hold, the lady disappeared amid the rough surges of the rapid stream, and the blindness which superstition had thrown over him fell at once from her distracted husband.

"Holy angels, she sank!" exclaimed Invereshie with a maddening yell that overwhelmed for a moment the very roar of the flood. "My love! my wife!—Oh murderer! murderer!"

He rushed wildly among the waters to save her. But the impenetrable cloud which had been all this time careering onwards, at that very instant blotted out the moon from the firmament, and left his soul to the midnight darkness of remorse and despair.

A STRANGER APPEARS.

Our friend Grant's sad story of John Macpherson of Invereshie and his unhappy lady produced so powerful an effect on his auditors, that we continued to walk on in silence for some time after he had concluded, each of us musing after his own fashion. We had been accidentally joined by a stranger, a stout made athletic little man, in an old-fashioned rusty black coat and waistcoat, corduroy breeches, and grey worsted stockings. In one hand he carried a good oaken stick, and in the other a little bundle, tied up in a red cotton handkerchief. This personage walked sturdily forth from a small house of refreshment by the wayside a few minutes before our friend had commenced his narrative; and we had been too much

occupied with our own conversation, at the time of his appearance, to notice him farther, than by exchanging with him the customary "*good day to you*" of salutation. But the stranger, having taken even this much as a sufficient introduction among pedestrians travelling in the same direction in so lonely a country as that we were then passing through, ventured to continue to keep pace with us in such a way, as to be all the while within ear-shot of what was said. To the story of John Macpherson he listened with most unremitting attention; and to our no small surprise, he was the first person to open his mouth to make a comment upon it, now that it was ended. After taking a short trot of several yards, to bring himself abreast of our friend the narrator, and at the same time taking off a very well worn hat with an air of marked respect towards him whom he was addressing, he spoke as follows.

STRANGER.—Might I be so bold, sir, as to offer a few remarks, critical, historical, and explanatory on the fragment of Macpherson history which you have just finished rehearsing?

GRANT (*somewhat surprised*)—Certainly, sir; I shall be very glad to hear them.

STRANGER (*with a grave and solemn air*)—Why then, courteous sir, whilst I am altogether wishful to render unto your tale every such praise as may be justly found to be due to it as the produce of one remarkable for that sort of inventive genius which caused Homer to contrive so pretty a story out of the bare *facks* of the Trojan war, and which enabled Virgil to interest us so much with that long tale which he tells, by exaggerating those few dry adventures which befel the Pious Æneas as he fled from Troy to found a new kingdom in Italy, yet must I honestly admit that I cannot compliment the historical fragment which you have given-furth to your friends for being parteeklarly verawcious.

CLIFFORD.—Bravo! Well done, old fellow. Ha! ha! ha! You beat Touchstone all to sticks. Never heard the lie more ingeniously given in my life.

STRANGER (*with great earnestness and very much abashed.*)—Howt no, Sir. Upon my solemn credit, I meant no such-an-a-thing. I only meant to convey to this gentleman, and that with all due respect and courtesy, my humble opinion, that in a grave piece of history, having reference

to a brave and honourable Highland clan, the true yevents should be closer stuck to, than it may be necessar to do where the subject matter is nothing better than such dubious and unimportant trash as that which the auncient Greek and Latin poets had to deal with.

GRANT (*a little nettled.*)—And what reason have you to suppose that this is not the true and authentic statement of the facts of John Macpherson's history as they really occurred? I gave them as I got them from another. You do not suppose that I altered or invented them?

STRANGER (*with an obsequious inclination of his body.*)—Howt away, no, no. No such-an-a-thing. If you got them from another, I have no manner of doot but you have rehearsed them simply as ye had them, without adding, or eiking, or paring, or changing one whit. But, nevertheless, the real facks have been sorely and most grievously tampered with by some one.

GRANT.—Indeed. And how come you to know anything about this Macpherson story? and what is your authority for saying that the facts have been tampered with?

STRANGER (*with oracular gravity.*)—Firstly,

or in the first place, I beg to premeese, that I am a schoolmaster; and therefore it is, that I am greatly given to accurate and parteeklar inquiry. Secondly, or in the second place; having daily practeesed myself into a habit of correcting the errors of my scholars, it is not very easy for me to pass silently by the blunders of other folk. And, thirdly, or in the third place, and to conclude, I am a Macpherson myself; and as it is natural that I should on that account be all the more earnest and punctilious in expiscating the facks connected with the history of that great clan, so is it also to be presumed that I may have had greater opportunity for conducking such an investigation. And so having premeesed this much, I may add, by way of an impruvment on the subject, that I shall be just as well pleased to correct your version of this history as I should be to correct the theme of any of my own boys.

GRANT (*smiling.*)—I am truly obliged to you for this gratuitous offer of your tuition.

STRANGER (*whom I shall now call* DOMINIE MACPHERSON)—Not in the very least obliged to me, sir. The greatest pleasure of my life is to instruct the ignorant; and in yespecial, I deem it

a vurra high honor and delight to me to have this opportunity of instructing such a gentleman as you. Proud truly may I be of my scholar.

CLIFFORD (*with mock gravity.*)—The master and the scholar methinks are quite worthy of each other.

DOMINIE (*with a bow to the speaker.*)—I am greatly obligated to you for the compliment, sir, (*then turning to Grant with a more confident and self-satisfied air than he had hitherto ventured to assume.*)—Firstly, or in the first place, then, sir, you must be pleased to know that John Macpherson of Invereshie did not espoose a south country woman; for his wife was a Shaw of Dalnabhert, on Speyside there. Secondly, or in the second place, the leddy never had any such extraordinar fascination over him as you have described her to have; for she was in reality so ill-natured a woman, that she and her goodman were continually discording and squabbling together. In the third place, or, as I should say, thirdly,—and it being one of the few conditions in which your tale in some sort agrees with the true history,—she was undoottedly so great a spendthrift, that many was the bitter quarrel that arose twixt her goodman

and her, because of her extravagances. But, fourthly, or in the fourth place, the worthy John Macpherson did not throw the lady into the Feshie; and this is a fack which I would in yes-pecial crave you to correct in any future edition, seeing that it brings an evil and scandalous report upon thé said John, and would seem to smell of murder, when the true parteeklars of the history, known to me from the time I was a babe, are as follows, to wit:—It happened one day that the dispute between them ran to a higher pitch than common, and the lady left the house with the intention of fleeing to her father at Dalnabhert. There was neither bridge nor boat upon Feshie at that same time; but the woman was so demented with rage, that she plunged into the water with the determination of wading through. Well, she had not gone three steps into the ford when she was carried off her legs entirely; but her body being buoyed up by reason of her petticoats, of which it is said that she was used to wear not less than four, (my grandmother, honest woman, did the same,) she floated down the stream into the deep water, until being brought by the swirl of an eddy near to a jutting out rock, she caught at a twig or

branch that grew near the edge, and held by it like grim death. And here I must admit, that, fifthly, or in the fifth place, Macpherson did of a surety apply the edge of his *skian dhu* to the bit twiggy she had a grip of. But, then, most people charitably believe that it was nothing else but pure courtesy that induced him to do so to the lady; for, as appearances most naturally caused him to believe that she had taken to the water with the full intent of making away with herself by drowning, he thought that the least that he as her husband could in common civility do, was to render to her what small help he could towards the effecting of her purpose. And then, as to his parting with her in these memorable words,—which, to the great edification of all the wives of Badenoch, have since become a proverb in that country, to wit, "*you have already taken much from me, you may take that with you too,*" it must strike you as being most evident, gentlemen, that if Macpherson was to part with his lady at all, he could not have parted with her in terms more truly obliging, or with words more generously liberal. But the most extraordinary and most important deviation from fact, of which the author of your

romance has been guilty, yet remains to be noticed; for, in the sixth place, or sixthly, Macpherson, who seems in the whole matter to have had no other intention than that his lady should get a good *dookie* (as we say, *Scottice*) in the Feshie, whereby to extinguish the fire of her rage, did not only most gallantly jump into the water to try to save her life, but he actually did save it, or at least the lady's life was saved some how or other, seeing that she was afterwards the mother of Æneas Macpherson of Invereshie, the direct ancestor of the present worthy Laird of Invereshie and Ballindalloch.

The modest yet dignified air of triumph, which the schoolmaster gradually assumed, as he thus went on unfolding fact after fact, and which was considerably augmented as he approached the conclusion of this his critical oration, very much amused us all.

Grant (*with an assumed gravity.*)—I see that I have not only to do with a gentleman of liberal classical acquirement, with one, too, who blessed with great acumen, has made the art of criticism an especial study, but with a person who is also great as an authority touching the particu-

lar historical point which is now in question. And yet, daring as it may be in one of my inexperience to enter the arena with an opponent so powerful, I may perhaps be permitted to observe, in defence of that version of this piece of history of which I have been possessed, that the apparent discrepancy between it and that which you are disposed to consider as the true statement, is, in truth, little or nothing in importance, and may, after all, be very easily reconciled. For, if we attend to the circumstances, we shall find, firstly, or in the first place, that there is nothing before us that may render it impossible for us to believe that Miss Shaw of Dalnabhert might not have received a boarding school education at Edinburgh, as many young ladies of Badenoch unquestionably do, yea and an education, too, which might have well enough fitted her to have mingled in the gaieties of a court. Secondly, or in the second place, as to the *discŏrdings* which you say took place between her and her husband, I think you must do me the justice to recollect that these were alluded to in my narrative, though they were delicately touched on, as you will allow that all such family quarrels should be. But even if you do not ad-

mit the propriety of this, you must at least grant that if I fell into an error at all in this respect, it was less an error of fact than of degree. In the third place, or thirdly, the evidence of both authorities is agreed as to the fact of the lady's extravagance, as well as in the important circumstance that her extravagance was the cause which ultimately led the parties to the brink of the river Feshie. Fourthly, or in the fourth place, the conflicting statements in the two several reports regarding the mode in which the lady first got into the water, will appear to be of little or no moment, when we give to them a due consideration. We are nowhere informed that any one was present but Macpherson and his wife; and when we reflect that these two individuals must have been at the time in a state of excitement and agitation so very great as altogether to deprive them of the power of judging distinctly of any thing, it would be quite vain for us to look to either of them for any accurate statement as to how the matter occurred. All accounts, however, are agreed as to the use made by Macpherson of the *skian dhu*. As to your sixthly, or in the sixth place, I think you will be disposed candidly to admit, that as my

informant saw fit to carry his narrative only to a certain point of time, so as to break off at the *black cloud* and *the despair*, it is not only perfectly possible, but extremely probable, that he meant to tell, in his second chapter, of the happy recovery of the lady from the waters of the Feshie,—of the perfect reconcilement of the pair,—of her reformation in all respects,—of the retrenchment of her expenditure,—of the disappearance of all dandies with plumed hats and piked shoes,—of the happy birth of the young Æneas,—and of his merry christening, with many other matters which the historian has now left us darkly to guess at.

The astonished critic was utterly confounded by our friend's reply, so solemnly and seriously uttered as it was; and after one or two "*hums*" and "*has!*" and a "*very true!*" or two, he fell back some footsteps in rear of us; and notwithstanding divers malicious attempts made on the part of Clifford to bring him once more into the fight, he relapsed into an humble and attentive listener.

Author.—Your tale, Grant, brings to my recollection a circumstance which, as tradition tells us, happened after the celebrated *Raid of Kilchrist*.

GRANT.—I am not aware that I ever heard of the Raid of Killychrist, celebrated though you call it.

AUTHOR.—I believe the outline of the story of that Raid has been given somewhere or other in print by a literary friend of mine, though, to tell you the truth, I have never as yet had the good fortune to see it. But I will cheerfully give you my edition of it, such as it is, if you are willing to listen to it.

CLIFFORD.—But stop for one moment; and, ere you begin your story, tell me, if you can, what that strange scare-crow looking figure is, which we see standing in yonder green marshy islet near the edge of the small lake immediately before us?

AUTHOR.—That figure has excited much speculation. It for some time greatly puzzled myself. I passed by this way more than once, in the belief, from the cursory view I had of it, that it was a solitary heron. But my curiosity was excited at last, by observing that it was invariably and immoveably in the same spot in the islet, whilst I discovered, to my no small wonder, that the islet itself was never found by me twice successively in the same part of the little lake, being sometimes

stationed in the middle of it, and at other times somewhere towards either end, or near to either of the sides.

CLIFFORD.—Come, come! ha! ha! ha! you are coming magic over us now. You don't expect that we are to believe any such crammer as this!

AUTHOR.—I assure you that what I state is strictly and literally true, though I must admit that you have some reason for doubt until you have a farther explanation; and I am glad that I have it in my power to give it to you as it was given to myself by an intelligent man who lives in this neighbourhood. What you see is in reality a floating island.

CLIFFORD.—A floating island! I know that you Scots are said to be fond of migration; but I had no idea that any part of your soil was in the habit of making voyages either for profit or pleasure.

AUTHOR.—Nay, nor does a Scot himself often move from any station where he finds himself comfortable, except it may be for the purpose of migrating into some other which may hold out yet greater advantages than that which he possesses. But this whimsical islet shifts its position without rea-

son, exactly like an idle Englishman, who, without any fixed object, moves from one spot of Europe to another, he cannot himself tell why, and merely as the breezes of caprice may blow him about.

GRANT.—A Roland for your Oliver, master Clifford! But (*addressing Author*) tell us how you account for this strange phenomenon?

AUTHOR.—The mass, as you see, is not very large. Its extent is only a few yards each way. It is composed of a light, fibrous, peaty soil, which was probably originally torn from its connecting foundation by the influx of some sudden flood, aided by a contemporaneous and tempestuous wind. Being once fairly turned adrift in the lake, we can easily conceive that its specific gravity must have been every succeeding day lessened by the growth of the matted roots of the numerous aquatic plants that grew on it, till it rose more and more out of the water, and became at length so very buoyant as to be transported about by every change of the wind.

CLIFFORD.—Bravo! You have lectured to us like a geologist; and I must confess, with as much show of reason in your theory as those of many of these antediluvian philosophers can pre-

tend to. But you have yet to play the part of the zoologist, and to give us some account of that strange animal, human being or beast—alive or stuffed—as it may be, that so strangely stands sentry yonder in the midst of it. One might almost fancy it to be one of Macbeth's weird sisters.

GRANT.—It has indeed a most uncouth and ghostly appearance when seen at this distance. It looks so much like some withered human figure, where we cannot easily reconcile it to reason, that any human figure could possibly be.

AUTHOR.—Yes; and when we think what its effect must be when it is seen by a stranger, sailing slowly over the surface of the little lake, impelled by a whistling wind—at that hour when spirits of all kinds are supposed to have power to burst their cerements—when the moon may give sufficient light to display enough of its wasted and wizard looking form to beget fearful conceptions, without affording such an illumination as might be sufficient to explain its nature; we may easily believe that many are the rustic hearts that sink with dread, and many are the clodpate heads of hair that bristle up—"like quills upon the fretful porcupine"—whilst whips and spurs are employed

with all manner of good will on the unfortunate hides of such unlucky animals as may chance to be carrying lated travellers past this enchanted lake towards their distant place of repose.

CLIFFORD.—I can well enough conceive all this. But you have yet to tell us what the figure really is.

AUTHOR.—Notwithstanding its imposing appearance, it is nothing more, after all, than a figure made of rushes and rags carelessly tied about a pole by some of the simple shepherds of these wilds. It is comparatively of recent creation; but I understand that the islet is by no means of modern origin, though I am led to believe that, like other more extensive pieces of earth, it has undergone many changes since its first creation. It must have been liable to be increased and diminished by various natural causes at different periods of its history.

DOMINIE MACPHERSON, (*half advancing into the group, with a chastened air, and more obsequious inclination of his body than he had ever yet used.*)—If I may make so bold as to put in my word—hu—hum. If I might be permitted to make so bold as to speak, I can assure you, gen-

tlemen, that the bit island yonder has long existed. I have known these parts for many a long year; and I can testify to the fack, from my own observation, added to and eiked out by that of men who were old when I was born. Superstitious people call it the witches' island, and believe that the weird sisterhood hold it under their yespecial control and governance.

CLIFFORD.—Much better sailing in it than in a sieve. But have you gathered none of the adventures of the Beldams to whom you say it belongs?

DOMINIE.—God forbid, sir, that I should say it belongs to such uncanny people! But truly there is a very strange story connected with it.

CLIFFORD.—A story, Mr. Macpherson,—pray let's have your story without delay, if you please, that we may forthwith judge whether you are to rank highest in the world of letters as an historian or as a critic. "*Perge Domine!*"

GRANT.—You will gratify us much, sir.

DOMINIE.—I shall willingly try my hand, sir; and if you find not the sweetness of Homer or Maro in my narrative, at least you shall be sure of that accuracy as to fack which so much distinguished the elegant author of the commentaries.

CLIFFORD, (*with mock gravity.*)—Doth the narrative touch your own adventures, my friend? Are you like Cæsar, the historian of your own deeds?

DOMINIE.—Not so, sir; but I had all the facks from my father, who knew the hero and the heroine, and all the persons whose names are mentioned in it.

CLIFFORD.—Ha! you have a hero, then, and a heroine too? Why that, methinks, looks somewhat more like romance than history.

GRANT (*smiling.*)—Be quiet, Clifford! You forget that you are all this while keeping us from our story. Pray, sir, have the goodness to begin.

The schoolmaster bowed; and taking a central place in the line of march, he proceeded with his narrative in language, so mingled with quaint and original expressions, that I cannot hope, and therefore do not always pretend to render it with the same raciness with which it was uttered.

LEGEND OF THE FLOATING ISLET.

I must honestly tell you, gentlemen, that my story hath much the air of a romance, as well as much of love in it, and many of the other ingredients of such like vain and frivolous compositions—but you shall have the facks as told me by my much honoured father, who, being a well employed blacksmith, not many miles from the spot where we now are, may be said to have been the chronicler of the passing yevents of his day.

Awell you see it happened that a well-grown handsome proper looking young shepherd lad, called Robin Stuart, had possessed himself of the young affections of a bonny lassie, the daughter of Donald Rose, one of the better sort of tenants of these parts. Their love for one another had grown

up with them, they could not well say how. Its origin was lost in the innocent forgetfulness of their childhood, as the origin of a nation is buried in the fabulous history of its infancy,—but, however born, this they both felt, that it had grown in strength and vigour every day of their lives, until with Robin it began to ripen into that honest and ardent attachment natural to a manly young heart, which was responded to on the part of bonny Mary Rose by all the delicacy and softness that ought to characterize the modest young maiden's return of a first love. But however natural it was for the tender heart of the daughter to beat in unison, or, as I may say, to swing in equal arcs with that of her lover, just as if they had been two pendulums of like proportions and construction, it was equally *selon les règles*, as the modern men of Gaul would say, that the churlish and sordid old tyke of a father, who had been accustomed to estimate merit more by the rule of proportion than any thing else, exactly perhaps as he would have valued one of his own muttons, according to the number of its pounds, should have stormed like a fury when he actually deteckit the *callant* Robin Stuart in the

very *ack* of making love to his daughter in his own house!

A desperate feud of some years' standing, had made Donald the declared enemy of Robin's father, old Harry *the herd of the Limekilns*, a cognomen which he had from the circumstance of his cottage being placed on the side of yonder hill of that name, so called from a prevailing tradition, that the lime used in the building of the castle of Loch-an-Dorbe was brought in the state of stone in creels on horses' backs from the quarries near to Grantown, and burned there. Old Harry was a poor man, and a herd, whilst Donald Rose was wealthy, and especially prided himself on being a *Duniwassel*, or small gentleman,—so that there thus existed three most active awgents, to wit—enmity, avarice, and pride, which combined to compel him to put an instantaneous stop to all such proceedings between Robin Stuart and his daughter Mary. Without one moment's delay, he thrust the young shepherd, head and shoulders, violently forth from his door, and smacking the palm of his hand significantly and with great force and birr on his dirk sheath, so as to cause the weepon to ring again—

"I'll tell ye what it is, my young birkie," said

he, in a voice like thunder, " gif I catch ye again within haulf a mile o' my dochter, ye sall ha'e a taste o' sweetlips here !—An' as for you, Mary, an' ye daur to let siccan a beggarly chield as that come within a penny stane cast o' ye, by my saul but I'll turn ye out owr my door hauld wi' as leetle ceremony as I ha'e done the same thing to Rab himsell yonder !"

But, as one of the ancient heathen poets hath it, love is a fire which no storm can extinguish—it feeds itself with hope, and only burns the brighter the more it is blown against by adverse blasts. You know, gentlemen, how Pyramus and Thisbe contrived to hold secret converse together. Though Robin and Mary had no crack in a wall through which to pour the stream of their mutual love,—nay, although their respective dwellings were some mile or two separate from each other, yet many were the private meetings which the youth and maiden contrived to obtain, during which they employed their time in fostering their mutual hopes, and in strengthening their belief that better and happier days were yet in store for them. And happy indeed would have been those days of their anticipation, if they could have proved happier

than were those stolen hours which they thus occasionally enjoyed together.

Now, it happened one beautiful day, in the beginning of summer, that Donald Rose rode off from his door to go to a distant market, whence there was no chance of his returning till late at night. The old saying hath it, that when the cat is away the mice will play. This was too favourable an opportunity to be lost by a pair of young lovers so quick-sighted as Robin and Mary. It had been marked by both of them for some weeks before it came; and the farmer's long-tailed rough grey garron had no sooner borne his master's bulky body in safety along the ticklish and treacherous path that went by a short cut through the long moss, and over the distant rising ground, than Robin Stuart, true to his tryst, appeared to escort his bonny lassie on a ramble of love. No one was at home to spy out their intentions but old Mysie Morrison, the good-natured hireling woman of all work; and she was too much taken up with her household affairs to trouble her head about watching the young lad and lass. Indeed, if she had thoughts of them at all, she was too much attached to her young mistress, and too well acquainted

with her secret, and too shrewd to betray her either by design or by accident.

As you may see, gentlemen, there was no great choice of pleasure walks in this bleak *destrick*, but the two young creatures were so taken up with each other, and so full of joy in each other's company, that the dreariest spot of it was as a rich and blooming garden in their delighted eyes. They tripped along merrily together, and bounded like roe deer over the heathery knolls, scarcely knowing, and not in the least caring, which way they went, until they found themselves by the side of the little *lochan* which we have but just left behind us. It was then the season when the wilderness of this upland country was clad in a mantle of wild flowers, and thereabouts especially they grew in so great variety and profusion that it seemed as if the goddess Flora had resolved to hold her court in that place. There, then, they resolved to rest a while; and Robin, producing the simple contents of a little wallet, which he carried under his plaid, they sat down together and feasted luxuriously.

When they had finished their meal, the lovers began to waste the hours in idle but innocent

sport. They roamed about here and there, gathering the gaudy flowering plants that grew around them; and after filling their arms with these wildling treasures, they again seated themselves side by side, to employ their hands in arranging and plaiting them into rustic ornaments. Whilst thus occupied, they were too happy and too much taken up with their own pleasing prattle to think of the progress of the sun, who was all this time most industriously urging his ceaseless journey over their heads, without exciting any of their attention, except in so far as his beams might have lent a livelier hue to the gay garlands they were weaving for each other, or yielded a fresher glow to the cheeks, or a brighter sparkle to the eyes, of those who were to wear them.

Whilst they were thus so happily and so harmlessly occupied, they went on with all the innocent simplicity of rustic life, repeating over and over again to each other their solemn vows of eternal love and fidelity, as if they could never have been tired of these their sweet and soothfast asseverations, whilst, at the same time, they uttered them with a copiousness of phraseology, and a variety of dialogue, truly marvellous in such a muirland pair

Designed & Etched by William Dyce, A.S.A. &c.

MARY ROSE AND ROBIN STUART.

see page 246, Vol. I.

as they were. It would have absolutely astonished all your writers of *novelles* to have overheard them, and it would have puzzled any of these fiction mongers to have invented the like.

"Oh that your father was but as poor and as humble as mine, Mary!" exclaimed the youth at last, "or, rich and proud as he is, that you could leave him, and content yoursel' wi' bein' a poor man's wife!"

"Na, Robin!" replied she, shaking her head gravely, and then laying her hand upon his arm, and looking up wistfully into his eyes, "you would never ask me, my father's ae bairn, to leave him noo that he has grown auld, and that my dear mother has left us baith and gane to Heeven! Gif, indeed, he could be but brought to look wi' a kind ee on you—then—then"—continued she, with a faultering tongue, whilst she blushed deeply, and threw her eyes down amidst the heap of flowers that lay at her feet,—"then, indeed, we might baith be his bairns."

"Oh! I wish again that he were but a poor man!" cried Robin, enthusiastically, "for then might thir twa arms o' mine mak' me as gude a match in his een as a' the bit tocher he could gie'

might warrant him to look for. Weel and stoutly wad I work for sic a prize as you, Mary!"

"An' weel wad I be pleased that ye should ha'e it, Robin, little worth as it is!" said Mary, with an expression of undisguised fondness. "Though I could na' gie up my father, I could gie up a' my father's gowd, gif it wad but bring you hame to help him. And gif it warna for him," added she, with a tear trembling in her eye, "I trow I could gang wi' you to the warld's end, an' I war never to see anither human face!"

"Oh, Mary!" exclaimed Robin, in a transport, "I could live wi' you in a desert. I could live wi' you in some wee uninhabited spot in the midds o' the muckle ocean, aye, though it war nae bigger than the bit witches' island there afore ye, aye, and as fond o' flittin' as it is too, and that we sould never leave its wee bit bouns."

There was something so absurdly extravagant in the very idea of two people being confined together to a space of a few yards square, to live the sport of every varying breeze that might blow over the surface of the deep, that Mary's gravity was fairly overcome, notwithstanding the high pitch of devoted feeling to which she had been wound up

at the moment. She could not control herself; and she gave way to loud peals of laughter, in which her lover as heartily joined her. "See!" cried she, the moment she could get her breath, whilst she pointed sportively to the little floating islet which was at that moment lying motionless, and almost in contact with the shore near to the spot where they were sitting, "see, see, Robby, how our wee bit fairy kingdom is waitin' yonder to bid us welcome!"

"Come, then, my queen, let us take possession o't then in baith our names!" cried Robin, in the same tone, and gaily and gallantly seizing her hand at the same time, he, with great pretended pomp and ceremony, led her, half laughing, and half afraid, towards the place where the island rested.

At the time my story speaks of, the borders of the loch were less encroached upon by weeds and rushes than you have seen that they now are, and the island lay, as if it had been moored, as mariners would say, in deep water close to the shore. It was, therefore, but a short step to reach it, and Robin easily handed the trembling Mary into it, with as much natural grace, I'll warrant me, as the

pious Eneas himself could have handed Queen Dido. The lassie's light foot hardly made its grassy surface quiver as it reached it,—but, full of his own frolic, and altogether forgetful for that moment of the precarious and kittle nature of the ground he had to deal with, he sprang in after her with a degree of force which was far from being required to effect his purpose, and so great was the impetus which he thus communicated to the floating islet, that it was at once pushed several yards away from the shore. With one joint exclamation of terror, both stood appalled, and they silently beheld the small fragment of ground that supported them moving, almost insensibly, yet farther and farther towards the middle of the loch, so long as any of the force which Robin had so unfortunately applied to it remained, and then it settled on the motionless bosom of the deep and black looking waters, at such a distance even from the bank which they had just left, as to forbid all hope of escape to those who could not swim.

Fled, indeed, gentlemen, was now all the mirth of this unlucky pair. Poor Mary was at once possessed by a thousand fears; and even the firmer

mind of her companion, though sufficiently occupied with its anxiety for her, was not without its full share of those individual superstitious apprehensions, naturally produced by the place where they were, and which secretly affected both of them. Neither of them could resist the belief, that supernatural interference had had some share in producing their present distress. But whatever Robin's private thoughts may have been, he was too manly to allow them to become apparent to Mary. Plucking up some long grass and sedges, therefore, and making them into a large bundle, he took off his jacket, threw it over it, and by this means made a dry seat for her in the very middle of the quivering and spungy surface of the islet. Then casting his red plaid over his shoulder, he stood beside her, now bending over her to whisper words of comfort and encouragement into her ear, and by and by stretching his neck erect, that his eyes might have the better vantage to sweep around the whole circuit of the dull and monotonous surface of the surrounding wastes. How mixed, yet how antagonist to each other were the ideas which now passed rapidly through his mind! At one moment he felt a strange and indescribable rap-

ture as the mere thought crossed him that this small floating spot of earth did indeed contain no other human being but himself, and her whom he would wish to sever from all the world besides, that she might be the more perfectly dependant on himself alone, and therefore the more indissolubly bound to him; and then would he utter some endearing words to Mary. Then again the shivering conviction would strike him, that although there was no *human* being but themselves there, there might yet be other unknown and unseen beings in their company that neither of them wist of, and he looked fearfully around him, scanning with suspicious eye, not only the whole surface of the lake, but every little nook and crevice of the shore. And then bethinking him of night, he lifted up his eyes with anxious solicitude from time to time, to note the position of the sun, whose progress he and his fair companion had previously so much disregarded; and great was his internal vexation when he perceived how rapidly his car was now rolling downwards, not, as the auncient poets would say, in his haste to lay himself in the lap of Thetis, but as if he had been eager to escape be-

hind yon great lump of a muirland-hill yonder to the westward.

But a yet more trying discovery soon began to force itself upon his attention. The islet on which they stood, seemed, as he narrowly measured it with his eye, to have sunk some inches into the water! Already in idea he felt its bubbling wavelets closing over his own head, and the dear head of her whom he so much loved! His heart grew sick at the very thought. Summoning up courage, however, he contrived to allow no outward sign to betray his feelings to Mary; and taking certain marks with his eye, he set himself to watch them with an anxiety so intense, and with a look so fixed, that he was unable rationally to reply, either by word or sign, to any thing that the poor lassie said to him, so that she began at length to entertain new apprehensions at the wild expression which his countenance exhibited. By degrees, however, she became more assured, for, after long and accurate observation had led him to believe that at least no very rapid change was taking place, his features gradually relaxed, and hers were for the time relieved by that very sympathy which had so enchained them.

And now the sun was fast approaching the horizon, and Robin's eyes were eagerly employed in endeavouring to penetrate even the most distant shadows that were rapidly settling down upon the hills, behind which he was about to disappear, whence they began to spread themselves over the wide extent of brown moors and black mosses that stretched every where around them. As the light passed away, his glances flew more hastily in every direction, in the vain search for some human being. Above all, he earnestly surveyed the road where he for some time sanguinely hoped that he might discover some one returning from the market, who might yet lend them an aid, though he felt that it quite defied him to form any rational conception as to what the nature of that aid could be. Again, he would most inconsistently shrink back, and instinctively shut his eyes, as if that could have concealed his person, from very dread that Donald Rose might come home that way and discover them in this their distressing and dangerous situation, for he was fully aware, that he had but little chance of rising in the old man's estimation by having thus had the misfortune to bring the life of his only child into so great peril. As he thus ru-

minated, he remembered that although this was not old Donald's shortest way home, yet it was that which he was most likely to take towards night, as being the best. And he moreover distinctly perceived, that if he did come that way before it was dark, he could not fail to discover them. For as the rugged and irregular muirland road wound round nearly one-third of the whole margin of the little loch, by reason of its having to cross the bit brook that issues from its western extremity, it was self-evident that no one could travel that way without having his eyes intently fixed, for a considerable time, in a direction that must compel him to survey the whole surface of the sheet of water, so that not a duck or a dab-chick could yescape them. And what if the farmer did not come! Might they not be discovered by some other hard-hearted person, who, instead of assisting them, might be so wicked as to carry the news of their situation directly to old Rose, whose rage, he felt persuaded, would be enough to burn up the waters of the loch. Such a finis to the adventure was the least misfortune they could look for from the malice of those evil spirits of the islet, by whom he believed that he and Mary had

been thus entrapped. Anxious as he had at first been to descry some one, he now longed for night to fall down on them and render them invisible. Then the utter hopelessness of eventual concealment occurred to him, for he reflected that the farmer must return home at some hour during the night; that when he did so return, he must find his daughter absent, and that his ungovernable fury would not be diminished by the tormenting suspense in which he would be kept regarding her until next day, when they should certainly be discovered. Robin's mind was tossed to and fro among such unpleasant thoughts as these, till they were all put to flight by the overwhelming force of that superstitious dread which taught him to believe that night would soon give an uncontrolled power to those evil beings, who had thus so cruelly used them.

"Oh, for a breeze of wind!" cried poor Robin in his agony, as a thousand formidable and ghastly shapes began to dance before his disturbed fancy. And—

"Oh, for a breeze!" sighed the soft and tremulous voice of Mary Rose, whose mind had all this while been silently following the same irregular

train of thought, and sympathetically participating in the distressing emotions which had been agitating her lover.

And now the sun went down in a blaze of glory beyond the western hills, and his last beams took leave of the surface of the water, after having shed a radiance over it, as well as a cheerful glow over the countenances of the two lovers, that but ill assorted with the misery of soul which they were enduring. By degrees a soft summer exhalation began to arise from the bosom of the loch, as well as from all the neighbouring pools, peatpots, and marshes. But balmy, and cheering, and invigorating as it was to all the parched offspring of nature that grew in this desert, which opened their bosoms to receive it, and gratefully exhaled their richest perfumes, it chilled the very hearts of the lovers, as night fell darkly and dismally around them.

"Robin," said Mary in a voice that quivered from the effects of the chilling damp, combined with those secret terrors which were every instant taking more and more powerful possession of her, in spite of all her reason and resolution to resist them. "Robin, put on your jacket, you will starve."

"Mair need for me, Mary, to gie ye this plaid

o' mine," replied he in a tender tone. "Here, tak' it about ye, my dearest lassie, and keep up a gude heart."

"Na, I'll no tak' nae mair aff ye," said Mary gently, refusing to allow him to throw the plaid over her.

"Let me—let me gie ye haulf o't then," said he, with a modest hesitation.

After some little farther discussion, the matter was at last arranged, for Mary stood up by Robin's side, and the ample plaid having been thrown over both of them, somewhat in the manner of a tent, the edges of it were held together by her lover's nervous arm, so as in a great measure to exclude the cold damp air. If it was not altogether shut out, Robin at least for some time felt none of its influence, for, finding himself thus the sole protector of his beloved Mary, his heart burned within him with love and pride, and all thoughts of evil spirits were banished for a time.

Things had not been long accommodated in this manner, when Mary complained that her feet began to grow cold and wet, and the change in Robin's thoughts may be conceived when he too became convinced that the water was certainly some-

how or other gaining upon them. The darkness was now such as to render it impossible for him to make any such minute observation as he had done before. He could only now guess vaguely, and his whole frame shivered with horror as the suspicion crossed him, that the unusual weight which the islet now bore having pressed it downwards, the upper and more porous parts of it, which were formerly comparatively dry, had imbibed a greater quantity of water than usual, and the specific gravity of the whole being thus encreased, it was gradually sinking, and must soon be altogether submerged. I say not that the poor lad reasoned thus upon pheelosophical principles, but, nevertheless, he did come to the conclusion that this treacherous bit of ground was sinking fast. How long or how short a time it might possibly take before the awful catastrophe should arrive, was more than he had any means of determining. He had nothing now left but to nerve himself with resolution to enable him to conceal his fears and his horrors from Mary, though, at the same time, he could not help clinging to her with an earnestness and a wildness of manner that did any thing but allay her terrors. Dark as the night was, all those

superstitious fancies which had disturbed their minds were banished by the overpowering conviction of speedily approaching dissolution which individually possessed them in secret. The black gulph by which they were environed, seemed, in the mind's eye of each of them, to be yawning to swallow them up; and the thought that they should die in each others arms, was the only consolation that visited their afflicted souls in that awful moment.

"Let us pray to the Lord!" said Mary, solemnly, "for our death hour is come!"

Robert, who would now have deemed it to be a sinful ack to speak to her of hope, which he had himself so utterly abandoned, immediately obeyed her command. You know, gentlemen, that it is the glorious preevilege of our Scottish peasantry to receive education from the pious and well conducked teachers of our parochial schools. Even the youngest men are thereby exerceesed in prayer, so that it becomes so much of a habit with them that they are at all times prepared to pour out their souls in extemporaneous offerings to the Deevine Being. You can easily understand, therefore, that at such a moment, when convinced

that he himself, and she whom he loved beyond all yearthly things, were about to be summoned to the footstool of their Creator, his prayer was solemn, yearnest, simple and sublime. So certain did the sealing of their doom now appear, that he put up few petitions for present help in this world. The whole force of his supplication was directed to their salvation through the merits of a Saviour, in that on which they were so soon to enter, and Mary clung closer to him as he spoke, and continued to follow all his expressions, now internally and now audibly, with a fervour that sufficiently proved the intensity of her faith and hope.

Whilst the poor creatures were thus employed, a dim gleam of light from the eastern horizon seemed as if struggling through the dense fog that hung over the loch, and soon afterwards a gentle passing breath of air was distinctly felt by both of them. It murmured around them, and fanned them, as it were, for a moment, and found its way even within the hollow of the plaid. Its voice was to them as the voice of their guardian angel, and it refreshed their drooping souls, although they knew not very well how it did so. In a very few minutes afterwards, however, the mist being broken

up by the influence of a full moon that had just risen, began to collect itself into distinct spiral columns, which dissipated themselves one after another, as if they had been so many spirits melting into air. The long wished for breeze then at length came singing most musically as it skimmed over the surface of the perfumed heath. And it had not long curled the hitherto still surface of the loch, till Robin and Mary began to perceive that the half drowned island was sensibly encreasing its distance from the shore whence they had taken their departure. There was something very fearful in this, and the poor lassie clung closer to her lover. But with all their fears it now seemed as if Hope was sitting beckoning to them on the opposite shore, towards which the breeze was so evidently though so slowly propelling them.

The moon now shone forth in full radiance, and speedily dissipated the broken fragments of the fog that yet remained. One mass only, denser than the rest, still hung poised over their heads, naturally maintained in that position by the attraction of the damp floating earth they stood on. To their great joy they perceived that the breeze was

encreasing, and that their motion was gradually accelerating.

" Mary, my dear," cried Robin, " keep a gude heart; I'm thinking that we'll maybe mak out yet. Let's hoize up the plaid till it catches mair o' the wund."

And, accordingly, they raised their arms and kept the plaid high over their heads, till it was bellyed out by the breeze like the lug-sail of a herring buss, and their velocity was tripled.

They were thus moving gallantly onwards, in anxious expectation that a very few minutes more would moor them in safety to the shore, so that there might yet be time for Mary to hurry home before her father should arrive to question her absence, when they suddenly perceived a horseman riding along the road which *sweep't* around the end of the loch they were now nearing so fast. What think ye, gentlemen, was the astonishment, dread and mortification of the poor lassie and her lad when they beheld the moonbeams reflecked from a face as broad and as pale as the disk of the luminary from which they had been last projected? It was Donald Rose himself!—As their supporting bit of earth drifted onwards with them, they

stood together for a moment petrified with surprise and fear, whilst they beheld him check his horse, and turn his head towards the loch, as if to gaze at them; and then—with one shriek from Mary, and a deep groan from Robin, which might have made a good treble and bass for the psalmody of the martyrs, both the two of them, by one simultaneous movement, sank down together among the rank grass and water-weeds in which they were standing, and the folds of the plaid collapsing around them, both were completely shrouded beneath it. There they lay, abandoning themselves to their perverse fate, and fearing to move or speak, until, in a very few seconds, they were drifted to the very spot where they too well knew that the enraged farmer must be already standing like a roaring lion ready to devour them; and they were thus prostrated, as it were, at the very feet of him whose ungovernable rage they had so much reason to wish to have avoided.

The floating island had touched the terra firma for some seconds, but still the conscious pair dared not to peep from beneath the covering that enveloped them. They lay, as I might say, as quiet as two mice in a bag of meal. They uttered not

a word. They hardly even dared to breathe. But, tremblingly in need of support under circumstances so very trying, the poor lassie Mary clasped her Robin about the waist with an energy equal to the terror she was moved by. It was the feeling of this her utter dependence upon him for support and defence that first subdued Robert's own fears, and awakened him to a sense of his own dignity as a man.

"An' ye'll hae but a thoughty o' patience, Maister Rose, I'll tell ye a' aboot it," said he, commencing his peroration from beneath the plaid, somewhat *sotto voce*, as the degenerate modern Romans would say. But gaining greater boldness as he heard the sound of his own voice, and that his words remained as yet unanswered, he went on to speak, gradually raising his tone as he did so, and at the same time erecting his person by slow degrees from his abject attitude, though without unveiling himself.

"Ye may think as ye like, Maister Rose, but I canna' help lovin' Miss Mary; I maun love her spite o' mysell, an' gin ye wad hae me no to love her nae mair, ye maun just dirk me here at aince. But for the sake o' a' that's good!" continued he,

blubbering from very emotion, "dinna offer to hurt ae hair o' *her* bonny head,—for by my troth an ye do, Maister Rose !——"

These last words were uttered in so loud and impassioned a key, that it sufficiently indicated the nature as well as the resolute determination of the threat that was intended to follow, even if the furious action of the uplifted arm and clenched fist had not left it quite unequivocal. So violent was the effect, that the plaid which had risen along with the speaker, and which had up to this point continued to muffle his head and eyes, was suddenly thrown off.

"Gude keep hus a' he's gane !" cried Robin with a stare of horror,—"As I'm a leevin' man ! —as I houp and believe I am"—continued he, pinching his own arms and thighs as he said so, to convince himself of the fack that he really was alive,—"it was your father's wraith we saw, Mary !"

Half fainting from the effect of the complication of terrors which had surrounded her, Mary Rose was hardly conscious of what Robin had said, and he for his part having gained that self-command of which the sudden nature of his alarm had for a

moment deprived him, now bit his lip and studiously avoided uttering one word that might convey to her the least inkling of that conviction which had just then flashed upon him, or that might distress her mind with any share of that superstitious dread which at this moment so completely filled his own.

"He's gane indeed, dear Mary," said he as he gently assisted her to rise; "let's be thankful that we're safe on dry land, and let me help you hame to your ain house as fast as I can, and may the Lord be aboot us!"

Adjusting his plaid over her, and placing his arm around her slender waist to support her tottering steps, he guided her homewards by the light of the moon through the rugged moor by a short path. Often as they went, did each of them secretly remember how auspiciously the morning sun had shone upon them as they had danced lightly together over the blooming heather! But they were both too much sunk by the unfortunate issue of their day's adventures, believing as they, poor things, foolishly did, that the powers of Evil themselves had combined to thwart them,—they were too much sunk, I say, to be able to utter much more

than monosyllables to each other, or such words at least as were expressive of gratitude to Heaven for having permitted them to yescape with life, whilst an indefinite dread of the fate that awaited them hung secretly lowering over each of their minds.

Lights blazed within the white-washed windows of Donald Rose's cottage, as it appeared on a knoll before Mary's dizzy eyes. Whether these might indicate her father's presence or not, she could not daur to guess. The poor lassie was so feared, that she hesitated to approach the door herself, yet she felt that there was still greater danger there for Robin, and, with a delicate pressure of the young lad's hand, she bade him tenderly farewell.

"Robin, haste ye hame to the Limekilns," said she. "Ye maunna face my father. Leave me to face him mysell."

"No!" said Robin boldly and with peculiar emphasis, "I ha'e noo faced *mair* than your father, Mary; and sae I'm no ga'in' to flee your father himsell, though he does wear a durk. Gif he *be* comed hame, ye may the mair want my help to meet him."

Fearfully alarmed for the consequences, and

still more apprehensive for her father's wrath against him than against herself, she endeavoured to argue with him on the folly of his rashness, and whilst they were both engaged in an animated, and somewhat imprudently loud discussion on this subject, they were startled by the voice of Mysie Morrison, who came suddenly upon them from the cottage.

"Bless ye, my bairns, is that you?" exclaimed this good domestic, "What i' the warld has keepit ye sae lang oot daffin? An' is that the end o' a' your courtin' after a', that you're to come hame an end it that gate wi' a collyshangy?"

"Has my father come back frae the market yet, Mysie?" tremblingly demanded Mary.

"Na, he's no come hame yet," replied the old woman, "and I'm thinkin' that he'll no be comin' hame the night noo. I'se warrant he's been weel set wi' some drouthy customer, an he'll hae staid whar he wuz. But come ye're ways in, my bairns, an' get some meat; I trow ye maun be clean starvin'."

With Robin's recollection of the spectre which he had beheld riding by the loch-side, he had little heart, at that hour, to cross the wide muir that lay

between Donald Rose's house, where he then was, and his father's cottage on the hill of the lime-kilns. He much preferred the risk of meeting Donald's substantial body of flesh and blood, lirk, and fury and all, within the four walls of a well-lighted up room, to having his moonlight path crossed upon the heath by the terrific simulacrum or wraith which had already blasted his sight. In addition, therefore, to the seducing attractions which Mary's society held out to him, coupled with those urgent admonitions which he was receiving at that moment from hunger and thirst, he had thus some vurra strong and powerful secret reasons for preferring to remain, to which he did not choose to give utterance. Mary, for her part, was sorely buffetted between her wishes and her fears. She had every desire to do that hospitality to her lover, which her own faintness began to remind her must now be so highly necessary to him. On the other hand, she had the strongest apprehension that her father might suddenly return, in spite of all that Mysie had said to the contrary, and she thus hung for a moment in doot-ful equilibrio, as a body may say, between the two opposing forces which were thus operating on her.

But Mysie, who was much less timorous, having done all she could to assure her that there was no danger of a surprise, she at length hushed her fears and tacitly yielded to her wishes. She and Robin, therefore, were soon seated over some comfortable viands, by a blazing hearth, whilst Mysie, with a judgment and prudence that might have well befitted an attendant of Queen Dido herself when she took refuge from the storm with the Trojan king in the cave, retired, to make security doubly sure, by setting herself to watch at the window of the neighbouring apartment, where, by the light of the moon, she might see her master return, so that she might give *timeous* notice to Robin Stuart to escape by the back-door, whilst old Rose was occupied in putting his horse into the stable.

This was well enough arranged in the old woman, gentlemen. Caius Julius Cæsar himself could not have made better dispositions to have prevented a night surprise. But, as our immortal bard, William Shakspeare, hath it, in the words which he hath put into the mouth of the lively Rosalind, time goes at different paces with different individuals. Upon this occasion it certainly went fast enough with Robin Stuart and Mary Rose. For,

though their minds were for a short time crossed occasionally by very fearful visions of the past, of some of which they dared hardly to speak to each other, yet these were soon banished altogether by their mutual smiles, and by the ardent and endearing expressions which they went on interchanging together. Swift flew the minutes, and their conversation was still waxing more and more interesting. They were seated close togegether; and, as their tender dialogue became more intensely moving, Robin's arm had unconsciously found its way around Mary's waist, whilst hers had fallen carelessly over his shoulder, and had accidentally carried with it the folds of his plaid, which she had not yet thrown off. The cheerful gleam from the blazing moss-fir faggots, threw a strong effect of light from the ample chimney over their figures. They indeed believed, from their inaccurate calculation, that this their felicity had endured for some short half hour only, whilst, by the drowsy account of old Mysie, who had sat nodding, and every now and then catching her head up to save it, if she possibly could, from dropping irrecoverably into the lap of Morpheus, the god of sleep, four good hours had gone by. As the truth

probably lay between, I shall take the mean of these two extremes, and therefore I may say, with some degree of confidence, that about two hours had elapsed when she at last yielded to the soporific influence, and fell into a sleep so profound, that ere it had endured for ten minutes, ten cannons or ten claps of thunder could hardly have awakened her; and whilst matters were in this state, the door of the apartment where Robin and Mary were so comfortably seated as I have just described them to be,—the door of the apartment was suddenly opened, and Donald Rose himself, covered with mud from neck to heel, and with a countenance pale and haggard as death, entered,—followed, gentlemen, still stranger to tell, by—Harry Stuart, the herd of the Limekilns!—The surprise by which the lovers were thus taken was perfectly complete. Their presence of mind was altogether gone. They started up together at once, without even attempting to unfold or withdraw their arms from the different positions which they had respectively assumed, whilst the drapery of the plaid hung over both of them, mingled with the garlands which they still wore. They stood as if they had been converted into statues.

Gude keep us a' frae evil!" cried Donald Ross the moment he entered, whilst, to their utter astonishment, he started back as he said so, his eyes glaring at them with a ghastly look of fear and horror, that was much too natural not to be perfectly genuine. "Gude keep us frae a' evil, are ye wraiths or are ye real? The same plaid!—the same garlands! and the same guise! Speak!—speak!—what are ye?—But I see," continued he, after a pause, during which he recovered himself a little; "I see, Gude be thankit! that ye *are* baith flesh and bluid."

"Aye flesh and bluid we are," said Robin Stuart, summoning up all his resolution and speaking in a determined tone. "We are flesh and bluid truly, and I trust that we shall soon be one flesh and one bluid too! Our souls are already as one!—sae let not ane auld man's avarice rend asunder twa leal hearts already joined by Heeven!"

"Joined by Heeven, indeed, Rabby!" replied old Rose, with a solemn and mysterious air; "and Heeven forbid that sic a miserable vratc as I am sould daur to interfere. What Heeven hath joined let not man put asunder! Oh, bairns! bairns!" continued he, as he swopped himself

down into his great oaken elbow chair, as if quite overcome with fatigue, both of body and mind; "Och, bairns! bairns! what ane awfu' gliff I hae gotten this blessed night! As I was on my road hame frae the market,—an' at a decent hour too,—for the drover an' me had but three half mutchkins a-piece, whan we pairted at Grantown,—whan I was on my road hame, as I was sayin', an' just as I was gaein' to pass round this end o' the Witches' Loch, to cross at the bit fuirdy yonder, what does I see, it gars my very flesh a' creep again to think on't,—what does I see, I say, but your twa figures, as plain as I see ye baith at this precious moment, in thay very garments ye hae on, an' wi' thay very garlands about your necks, an' shouthers, an' breasts, an' baith claspit thegither, as yé war just yenoo, whan I came in. I say, I saw ye baith in that very loch, an' in that very pouster, comin' skimmin' o'er the surface o' the deep water o' the loch, wi' that very red plaid aboon ye baith for a sail. But, Gude proteck us a'!—What think ye?—The full moon was just risen in the east, an' her very light was shinin' through the twa spirits, an' aboot them there was a kind o' a glory, just like unto the mony coloured brugh that ye hae nae doot aften

seen about the moon hersel. Och me, it wuz a grusome sight! I wish I may e'er won ower wi't!

Robin and Mary exchanged intelligent glances with each other during this part of old Rose's narrative; but he was too much overpowered with what he had seen, and too full of his subject, to observe what passed between them.

Tak a wee drap o' this, father;" said Mary, handing him a brimming cuach, "you will be muckle the better o't."

"Thank ye, thank ye, my bonny bairn!" said the farmer, giving her back the empty cuach, and kindly patting her head as he did so. "I'm sure, my dauty, it was ill my pairt to cross ye as I did. But, stay!—whaur was I?—Weel, ye see, just as the twa speerits war comin' *whush* athort the loch upon me far faster than ony wild-duke could flee,—the very dumb brute that I was on started back wi' fear, whurled aboot in a moment, an' whuppit me awa' back o'er the moss in spite o' mysel', regairdless o' ony road; and I trow I never stoppit till I wuz on the t'ither side o' Craig Bey, whar, by good luck, I forgathered wi' Harry o' the Limekilns there;—fear, like death, will pit oot the fire o' the auldest fued,—an' whan Harry

heard the cause o' my flight,—for whan he met me I was fleein' like a muir-cock down the wund,—I say, whan Harry heard o' what an a sight I had seen, an' he bein', as it were, in some degree, conneckit wi' it, as wee'l as mysel', I trow he wuz as glad to hae me wi' him as I wuz to hae him wi' me, wi' the houp o' keepin' aff waur company. Harry had nae better wull to gae by the Witches' Loch than I had, and sae we cam' ower by the short cut through the lang moss thegither.—A bonny road, truly, for sic an afu' late hour o' the night, for a' that we had the moon, as ye may see well eneugh by the dabbled state o' my trews.—I'm sure my puir beast 'ill no be able to crawl the morn after a' the gliffin', an' galloppin', aye, an' I may say soomin' too that he has had, for I hae some doots gif there be ae moss hole atween Craig Bey an' this hoose that he has na' had to swatter through."

"Let me get dry stockins for ye, father," said Mary. "Na, my dauty, its no worth while for a' the time!" replied Donald, "An' noo, Harry, man," continued he, turning to his companion, who had been all this while standing near the door, "cum ben, man, an' sit doon; what for dinna ye

sit doon? An' noo, I say, although ye *are* but a poor man, Harry, an' no just sae weel come by deschent as I am, wha, as ye are maybe awaur, am come o' a cousin sax times removed of the Laird of Kilravock himself, which a' the warld kens to be ane o' the maist auncientest families in Scotland. I say, though ye are no just descended frae siccan honorable forebears, yet ye are ane honest man."

"I trust that I am sae, neebour," said Harry, modestly, but with his head yereck, as ane honest man's always should be.

"Aweel, aweel!" cried old Rose, impatiently, "as I was gaein' to say, wee's just owerlook a' thae things, an' souther up a' oonkindness that may hae been atween us, an' sae wee'l mak' the best o't, an' hae your laddie an my lassie buckled thegither as soon as the minister can mak' them ane.—Come, man, gie's your hand on't!"

"Wi' a' my heart!" replied Harry Stuart, with a good-natured chuckle; "an' I'll tell ye what it is, Carl, maybe ye'll find after a' that the son o' Harry the herd o' the Limekilns is no just sae bare a bargain as ye wad hae yemagined. The herdin' trade, gif it maks little it spends less;

an' I hae na been at it for better nor fifety years without layin' by a wee bit pose o' my ain; an' gif a gude bein bit hill farmie can be gotten for the twa, I'se no say but I may come doon wi' as muckle as may buy the best end o' the plenishen an' stockin."

"That's my hearty cock!" exclaimed old Rose, slapping Harry soundly on the back. "Mary, my dauty! I was sae muckle the better o' the wee drap ye gied me yon time, that I think neither Harry nor me wad be the waur o' anither tasse."

It would be yequally vain and unnecessar, gentlemen, for me to attempt to describe the happiness of the two lovers, or the general joy of that night. If Homer or Maro were alive, and here present, they would fail to do justice to such a theme. I may shortly conclude by simply telling you, however, that Mysie's slumbers were rudely broken by the stentorian voice of her master,—that she was speedily put to work at her yespecial occupation in the kitchen,—that the rustic feast was quickly spread,—that the bowl circulated, or, rather, to speak with a due regard to fack, that it passed backwards and forwards very frequently from lip to lip of the two thirsty seniors,—that the

young couple were in Elysium,—that the old men were garrulously joyous,—that Mysie was frantic, and danced about like a daft woman, and that the sun peeped in upon them from the distant eastern hills ere they even began to think of terminating their revels.

DOMINIE DELIGHTED.

GRANT.—Why, sir, you are quite as great as a story-teller, as you are as a critic.

CLIFFORD.—Homer or Maro could never have held a candle to you! Why your floating island would beat a steamer. But, joking apart, we are really much obliged to you for the very interesting story you have told us.

DOMINIE (*bowing*).—I am yespecially proud and happy that you are pleased with it, sir.

AUTHOR.—We are all very much indebted to you indeed, for you have helped us very agreeably over the most dreary part of our road.

The good man rose an inch or two higher than he had hitherto appeared, and his cheek glowed with satisfaction.

We had now come to the pass of Craig-Bey, where the Grantown country opened to us. A rocky hill arose on our right, wildly wooded with tall Scottish pines, whilst, on our left, the ground declined into a hollow, through which the dark streamlet that drains the extensive peat-bog, whence the villagers of Grantown are supplied with fuel, throws itself into a deep rocky ravine, along which our road skirted. At some distance to our left, and on the farther side of the glen, a beautiful smiling portion of Highland country arose in swelling grounds, simply cultivated, amidst natural birchen groves; whilst every now and then we had a transient view directly downwards, where the stream threw itself into a fairy little holm, surrounded by tall castellated rocks, richly tinted with warm coloured mosses, and rising picturesquely from among woods of golden-leaved aspen and birch.

CLIFFORD.—Is there no story connected with that beautiful spot below?

AUTHOR.—The place is called Huntley's Cove. It has its name from some cavity in the crag, which is said to have been the place of conceal-

ment of George Second, Marquis of Huntley, in the time of Charles I.

CLIFFORD.—I forget his history at this moment.

AUTHOR.—He was married, if I remember rightly, in 1609, to the Lady Anne Campbell, eldest daughter of Archibald, seventh Earl of Argyle; and he was, therefore, brother-in-law to Archibald, the eighth Earl of Argyle, who so strenuously exerted himself in the cause of the people against King Charles I., and who, as you may recollect, was appointed by the Convention of Estates, 16th April 1644, commander-in-chief of the forces raised to suppress the insurrection of his brother-in-law, this very Marquis of Huntley of whom we are now talking. The Marquis, you know, rose in arms for the King in the north, but Argyle marching against him, dispersed the royalists, and obliged Huntley to fly to Strathnaver, in Sutherland. Huntley again appeared in arms in 1645, and refused to lay them down even when commanded by the King, who was then under the control of the Parliament of 1646. He was exempted from the pardon granted on the 4th March 1647, and he was that same year taken prisoner. I remember the peerage account

of him states, that his capture took place in *Strathnaver*,—a blunder occasioned by the circumstance of his having fled to that district of country upon the first mentioned occasion. It was in *Strathaven* that he was taken, and the similarity of names assisted in producing the confusion. Before his capture he lay concealed in *Strathaven*, or as it is very commonly called *Stradaun*, and when more than ordinarily alarmed by an increased activity in the search for him, he used to come over to hide himself here for greater security. I think it was an ancestor of the present Sir Niel Menzies of Castle Menzies, who took him, but the legendary circumstances have escaped me, if I ever knew them.

GRANT.—Thus it is that some of our most curious and valuable traditions are lost.

CLIFFORD.—It is truly provoking that it should be so. As we have Roxburghe, and Bannatyne, and Maitland Clubs for the preservation and printing of old writings, would it not be a meritorious thing to establish a Legend Club, the object of which should be, to proceed systematically throughout every part of the British dominions to collect and write down all the legendary and traditionary matter which may yet remain?

GRANT.—There is no doubt that an immense mass of materials might thus be gathered together for the use of the novelist and play-wright.

CLIFFORD.—Nay, nay, Grant; but joking apart, I do think, that although the great mass might be rubbishy enough, and, perhaps, much of it fitter for the compounder of melo-dramas than for any thing else,—*croyez moi on doit cependant trouver des perles, on plutot des diamants dans ce grand fumier.* And then when you think that the numerous fitful beams of light which might proceed from these recovered diamonds should be concentrated into one focus, it is not very impossible that history itself might receive some fresh illumination from the flame that might be kindled.

AUTHOR.—Your scheme is amusing enough, and by no means undeserving of attention; but I conceive that the utility of such a society as you speak of would very much depend upon the efficiency of its secretary.

CLIFFORD (*with an arch look.*)—Why, no doubt, it would so. And therefore I should propose to confer that important and distinguished post upon our new acquaintance Mr. Macpherson here, seeing that he is so much given to searching out the truth

of such things, and that he has, moreover, proved himself to be so able a narrator of them after he has found them out.

DOMINIE, *(His eyes glistening with pride and delight, as he again advanced to fill that place in the line of march which he had occupied during the time we were listening to his tale.)*—What could be more to my mind than such an occupation! And yet, sir, seeing that I am already planted as a teacher of youth in a comfortable house in Caithness, with a small garden and a cow's grass appended thereto; to all which there falls to be added a salary, which though small, yet sufficeth for my mainteenance, who have no wife or "charge of children," as Lord Chancellor Bacon hath it, save that of the children of other people, whence there arises to me not expense but yemolument, it would be well to know what sum of money by the year might be incoming to the holder of that secretaryship, of which you have spoken; seeing that prudence bids us be sure that we move not our right foot until our left be firmly set down.

CLIFFORD.—As to the matter of revenue, I fear there would be more of honorary dignity than

of edible income attached to the situation. I would, therefore, earnestly advise you, since I now learn that your lot has already been so pleasantly cast, to hold your right foot fast in Caithness, where, were the society to go on, you might be appointed one of its honorary corresponding members.

DOMINIE.—Thank you, sir, your advice is good. I could by no means afford to throw away my cow's grass and potato-yard to the dogs, to say nothing of my salary, without something better. I shall therefore e'en hold as I am.

CLIFFORD.—What mountain is that which I see rising blue and grand yonder in the eastern distance?

GRANT.—I have now a right to step forward as your cicerone, Clifford, for this is the country of the great clan to which I belong. Yet I must confess that I have no great knowledge of its history. I can at least tell you, however, that the mountain you are inquiring about is Ben Rinnes, the hill which rises over the ancient house of Ballindalloch, at the junction of the rivers Avon and Spey. Ballindalloch belongs to an old family of the Grants.

DOMINIE.—I could tell you a curious legend

about the building of the castle of Ballindalloch, were it not deemed presumption in me to tell of the Grants in presence of so accomplished a member of the clan.

GRANT.—Sir, I shall cheerfully trust to you to do justice to the Grants, and especially to the Grants of Ballindalloch, for since the Macphersons are now engrafted on the family of that house, I think you will be disposed to say nothing that may be in any wise to their disparagement.

DOMINIE.—God forbid that I should. They have always been kind friends of mine.

CLIFFORD.—I protest against any more stories till after dinner. I presume we shall find an inn at Grantown, and I therefore beg leave to move that all lengthened communications be adjourned until we are fairly set in to be comfortable for the evening.

GRANT.—Agreed. Now then follow me in at this gate that opens to our left here, and through this plantation, and I, as your cicerone here, shall show you something worth looking at.

We had no sooner burst from the confinement of the trees, than a wide, and extensive, and grand prospect opened to us. From the immediate fore-

ground, the eye ran gently down some sloping cultivated inclosures, till, passing over the wide-spread woods by which these were surrounded, it swept with eagle flight across the wide valley of the Spey and the endless forests of Abernethy, and rested with joy and with a feeling of freedom on the blue chain of the Cairngorum mountains, rising huge and vast above these minor dependant hills that were congregated about their bases. To the left our view was bounded by tall groves of timber-trees, chiefly beeches, and after penetrating these, the lofty bulk of Castle Grant presented itself within an hundred yards of us.

CLIFFORD.—I think it will not be considered as any breach of the rule we have just laid down, if you should give us an outline, in three words, of the history of this the feudal residence of your chief.

GRANT.—All I can tell you regarding it is, that it has been the seat of the chief of our clan ever since the fourteenth century, when the surrounding lands were taken from the Cumins and bestowed on the Grants by the crown. Another large *cantle* of the ancient possessions of the Cumins came into the family by the marriage of Sir

John Grant with Matilda or Bigla, the heiress of Gilbert Cumin of Glenchearnich.

DOMINIE.—True, true, sir, I have a curious story about that. You see, gentlemen, Gilbert Cumin, whose cognomen was Gibbon More——"

CLIFFORD.—You will forgive me for interrupting you, sir, but you will recollect, that although we allowed Grant to tell us what he knew about the castle, we have just laid it down as a rule, that we are to have no more *long* stories upon empty stomachs. Let us hasten to see the interior of this chateau, and then to Grantown and to dinner with what appetite we may. You shall dine with us, and I shall book you for there giving us Gibbon *More*, or any *More* you may be possessed of.

DOMINIE.—Your pun is most excellent, sir, ha! ha! ha!—your reproof is most just, and your invitation most kind, and readily accepted. And as I can be of little use to you here, gentlemen, perhaps I shall be most benefeecially employed, both for your interest and my own, by stepping my ways on to Grantown, and looking to the preparation for your accommodation and entertainment at the inn.

AUTHOR.—No, no, sir, we have already secured

all that by the gilly who has preceded us with the pony. We cannot part with you so, your information may be useful to us.

CLIFFORD.—This huge pile seems to have been built at various periods, and with no great taste. That tower is the only picturesque part about it.

GRANT.—That is called the Cumin's Tower, and it is perhaps the only very old fragment of the building. The most modern part is the northern front, the style of which is quite inappropriate.

CLIFFORD.—Come, let us hasten to discuss the interior;—my appetite at present is sufficiently sharp, yet it is for something more digestible than granite and mortar.

We hurried through the castle, admired the great hall, some fifty feet by thirty in size, and were particularly delighted with some of the old family portraits, which are extremely curious as to costume.

CLIFFORD.—What a fierce old white-bearded fellow that is in the bonnet and tartan plaid, drawing a pistol as if he was about to shoot us. I should not like to meet in a wood with such an one as he appears to have been, unless I met him as a friend.

DOMINIE.—That is old Robert Grant of Lurg. I can tell you many a story about him. He was surnamed old *Stachcan*, or the Stubborn; and—a——"

CLIFFORD.—Unless you are determined to deserve that surname, as well as ever the said Robert Grant did, you had better attempt no more stories till after dinner, my good friend. And now, methinks, we have seen enough of these bearded, belted, and bonneted heroes; and if you have no objections, I think we may as well proceed to march into quarters for the night.

A walk of little more than a mile brought us to the village of Grantown, and a period of time something less than a couple of hours, found us all seated, after a very good dinner, round a cheerful fire, each preparing to light his cigar, and moderately to sip the fluid that was most agreeable to him.

CLIFFORD, (*opening his tablets*).—Let me see what my book says. Ha!—Legend of the Raid of Killychrist—Building of Ballindalloch—Gibbon More—Old Stachcan!—The Raid comes first—the Raid stops the way,—so drive on with the Raid if you please.

AUTHOR.—Since you desire it, I shall do so, in

order as you say to get it out of the way. But I must tell you that the Raid of Killychrist does in fact form so small a part of that which I have to narrate to you, that I might rather call it—The Legend of Allan with the Red Jacket.

CLIFFORD.—Pray call it what you please, but *quocunque nomine gaudet*, let us have your legend if you please without farther loss of time.

LEGEND OF ALLAN WITH THE RED JACKET.

As a prelude to the legend of the Raid of Killychrist, or Christ's Church, I must condemn you to listen to a considerable portion of the previous history of the great rival clans of MacDonell and MacKenzie, which led to that event. A deep-rooted feud had existed for many years between those two neighbouring Highland nations, as I may well enough call them. So savage was their mutual hatred, that no opportunity was lost, upon either side, of manifesting the bitterest hostility towards each other. They were continually making sudden incursions with fire and sword into each other's territory,—burning cottages—destroying crops—driving away cattle—levying contributions on defenceless tenants—carrying off hostages, and mas-

sacring such unfortunate individuals or straggling parties as might happen to fall in their way, without always showing much regard to age or sex. It was one unvarying history of rapine and bloodshed, uninterrupted except at such times and for such periods when both parties happened to be too much exhausted to act on the offensive.

It was fortunate for the MacDonells, that about the beginning of the seventeenth century, Donald MacAngus MacDonell of Glengarry, chief of the clan, had so harried the MacKenzie country in one dreadful and destructive raid, and had so swept away its wealth and thinned its people, as to have rendered them comparatively innocuous for a number of years; for, during the lapse of these, he became so old and infirm, as to be not only quite unable for any very active or stirring enterprise, but he would have been unequal to the defence of his own territories against the inroads of his neighbours. He had two sons, but neither of them was old enough to relieve him of the cares and fatigues incidental to the government of such a clan. Angus the eldest, indeed, although only some fifteen or sixteen years of age, was extremely bold and impetuous. Like the most forward and best-grown

eaglet of the aery, he would have often rashly braved, with unpractised wing, the storms which raged around the cliff where he was bred, had it not been for the wholesome restraint which the old man was with difficulty enabled to put upon him, and which he could hardly enforce, even with the assistance of his nephew, Allan MacRaonuill MacDonell of Lundy, who being then in the prime of life, acted as captain or chief leader of the clan Conell.

Allan of Lundy, so called from the loch of that name near Invergarry, was the pride and darling of the clan, and it was not wonderful that he should have been so, for he possessed all those qualities which were likely to endear him to Highlanders in those savage times. He was remarkable for his great activity of body, for his wonderful agility in leaping, and his extraordinary swiftness of foot, and endurance in running. But these were not the qualities which the clansmen most especially prized in him; for, whilst he was kind to every one who bore the name of MacDonell, he was ever ready to visit those who were their enemies with the most ruthless and remorseless vengeance. He delighted in wearing a splendid jacket of scarlet

plush richly embroidered with gold, and when the day of battle came, the brave MacDonells always looked to that jacket as to a rallying point, with as much devotion and confidence as they looked to the banner of the chief himself, for they were always certain to see it in the front of every charge, and in the rear of every retreat. It was from this that he acquired his most distinguished cognomen, that of *Allan with the red jacket.*

It was not surprising that a youth of a haughty and impetuous temper, like that of Angus MacDonell could ill brook the well intended admonitions which he received from a cousin, upon whose interference in the affairs of the clan, he was taught by the vile insinuations of certain sycophantish adherents, to look with a jealousy which was but an ill requital for all Allan of Lundy's affection towards him. That affection, though it came from a bosom which was capable of nursing that fierce and cruel spirit which animates the tiger, was deep and sincere. It was an affection which had its basis in gratitude, in love, and in veneration, for the old chief, his uncle, who had been to Allan as a father, and, therefore, it was born with the birth of the boy Angus. It was an affection

which had grown stronger and stronger every day with the growth of its object, on the development of whose character the future happiness and glory, or misery and disgrace, of the clan, must depend. It was an affection, in short, which nothing could shake, and which even the often unamiable conduct of Angus towards him could never for one moment chill.

It happened one rainy and tempestuous night, that whilst a party of clansmen, returning from some distant expedition, were approaching the gate of Invergarry Castle, they suddenly encountered a tall man wrapped up in an ample plaid. He started when the MacDonells came upon him.

"Friend or foe?" cried the leader of the party.

"*A friend!*" coolly replied the other, "unless you are prepared to tell me that the days are past when a MacIntyre may claim hospitality from a MacDonell."

"The day can never come when a MacIntyre shall not be welcome to a MacDonell," replied the other. "Are they not but as a limb of the goodly pine stock of clan Conell?—say—what wouldst thou here?"

"I am a wayfaring man," answered the stranger,

" and all I would ask is shelter and hospitality for an hour or twain, till this tempest blow by."

" Thou art come in the very nick of time, my friend," said the MacDonell, " for, hark!—the piper has gone to his walk, and he is already filling his drone as a signal for us to fill our stomachs. The banquet is serving in the hall, so in, I pray thee, without more delay,—trust me, we are as ready as thou canst be for a morsel of a buck's haunch, or a flaggon of ale."

The old chief of the MacDonells had already occupied his huge high backed chair on the *dais*, at the upper end of the hall, and his eldest son Angus, and his cousin Allan of Lundy, the captain, and the other chieftains of the clan, had taken their seats around him, and the greater part of the places at the board had been filled, as rank might dictate, down to the very lower end of it, when the stranger was announced,—

" Give him entrance!" cried the hospitable old chief, " This is a night when the very demons of the storm seem to have been let loose to do their worst. No one would drive his enemy's dog to the door in such a tempest. Were he a MacKenzie we could not see him refused a shelter

from so bitter a blast. A MacIntyre, then, may well claim a hearty welcome."

The door of the hall was thrown open, and the stranger entered. He doffed his bonnet, and bowed respectfully to the chief, and to those assembled, yet his countenance remained partly shrouded by the upper folds of his plaid, which had been drawn over his head as a shelter from the fury of the elements, and it now hung down thence so as entirely to conceal his person. There was enough of him visible, however, to show that he was a tall, broad-shouldered, and very athletic man, in the prime of life, with large fair features, small sharp eyes, overhanging eye-brows, severe expression, and a profusion of yellow hair and beard that very much assisted in veiling his face. The retainers who were nearest to him eagerly scrutinized his plaid, as such persons were naturally enough wont to do; but it was so soiled with the mud-water of the mosses in which it seemed to have been rolled, that knowing, as some of them were in the tartans of the different clans, they could not possibly make out the set of that which he wore. They saw enough, however, to satisfy them that it was

green, and as they knew that to be the prevailing hue of the tartan of the MacIntyres, they examined no farther.

"Friend, thou art welcome!" said the chief; "a MacIntyre is always welcome to a MacDonell. Take your seat among us as your rank may warrant, and spare not the viands or liquor with which the board abounds—*Slainte!*" and with this hospitable wish of health and welcome, he emptied the wine cup which he held in his hand.

"Thanks!" said the stranger, bowing his head with an overstrained politeness; and without more ado he seated himself in a retired and rather darksome nook, near the lower end of the board, where he immediately engaged himself deeply, and without any very great nicety of selection, with such eatables and drinkables as came within his reach, so that he speedily ceased to be any farther interruption to the conversation which had been begun at the head of the table, to which every one had been most attentively listening when he came in.

"What sort of hunting had you to-day, Angus?" said Allan of Lundy.

"I brought down a stag royal," replied Angus, with an air of sullen dignity.

"That was well," replied Allan of Lundy; "it was as much as I did."

"And why should I not do as much as you, cousin?" demanded Angus somewhat peevishly.

"When you come to your strength, Angus, you may perhaps do more," replied Allan.

"My body," said Angus haughtily, "aye, and my mind, too, are strong enough for every thing that a chief of Glengarry may be called upon to perform. And now I think on't, father," continued he, turning towards the chief. "I grow tired of this wretched mimicry of war which I have so long waged against the deer of our hills. I would fain hunt for bolder game. It is time for me to be hunting the *Cabar Fiadh** of the MacKenzies! Why should our ancient enmity against them have slept so long? We seem to have forgotten the disgrace of that ignominious day, never to be washed out but in rivers of MacKenzie blood, when fifty gallies of our clan fled from before the

* *Cabar Fiadh*, the head of the wild deer, the crest of the clan MacKenzie.

Castle of Eilean Donan, defended as it was by no other garrison than Gillichrist MacCraw and his son Duncan alone, when a single arrow from the boy's quiver pierced our chief, and dispersed his formidable armament. Let us hasten to wipe away so foul a disgrace."

The speech of the young chief of Glengarry had been repeatedly cheered during the time he was speaking; and he finished amidst vociferous applause. The stranger in the green plaid halted in his meal to bend an anxious attention to every thing he uttered.

"Angus," said the old chief, "you have spoken unadvisedly boy. These are subjects fitter for the private chamber of council than for the festive board. You, moreover, seem to have forgotten that the quiet which the MacKenzies are forced to keep, is owing to some successful enterprises of my own, from the humbling effects of which they have not even yet recovered."

"If that be the case, father," cried Angus energetically, "let us keep them down when we have them down! Let me finish what you so nobly began. Promise me that you will grant me to

lead a raid against these *stags-heads*. Promise me, dear father!"

"A raid! a raid led by the young chief!" cried the vassals, starting up from the table as one man with enthusiastic shouts.

"Aye," said Angus, "and the young chief shall not go unattended. Every warrior of the name of MacDonell,—nay, every marching man who can trace one drop of his blood to the clan Conell, shall share in the glory to be gathered in the first raid of Angus MacDonell against the MacKenzies!"

"All shall go! all shall go!" cried the clansmen who were present.

"Aye, all shall go!" cried the young chief, warming more and more with the applause he was receiving. "And here, as a good omen of our success, here have we this night a MacIntyre among us. You, sir," continued he, addressing himself to the stranger in the green plaid, "you shall bear a message from me to your chieftain. Tell him to whom you owe service, that the tenth day of the new moon shall be the day of our gathering. It is long since our war cry of

Craggan-an-Fhithick has rung in a MacKenzie's ear!"

"Craggan-an-Fhithick!" shouted the clansmen.

"Tell him to whom you owe service, that Craggan-an-Fhithick shall once more rend the air," said Angus; "and that the young chief of Glengarry shall lead a raid against the MacKenzies, of the fame of which senachies and bards shall have to speak for ages to come."

"I shall surely bear your message to him to whom I owe service," said the man in the green plaid, after rising slowly, and making a dignified but respectful bow. And then putting on his bonnet, and gathering his plaid tightly about him, he paced solemnly and silently out of the hall, and departed.

"Methinks you have been somewhat rash and hasty in this matter, Angus," said the chief, with a cloud on his brow. "I have as yet given no consent. What think you of this affair, Allan of Lundy?"

"Much as I am wearying to wreak my vengeance on the MacKenzies," replied Allan of Lun-

dy, "I do think that my young cousin has been somewhat precipitate in this matter. A year or two more over his head would have confirmed his strength, and made him fitter for enduring the fatigue of such an enterprise. He is too young and unripe as yet to be gathered by death in the bloody harvest of the battle field. The loss of one of so great promise would be a severe blow to our clan."

"The loss of me indeed!" cried Angus, with a lip full of a contempt which it had never before borne towards Allan of Lundy, and which Allan of Lundy could not believe had any reference to him. "If you did lose me, you would only thereby be the nearer to my father's seat."

"Speak not so, Angus!" said Allan with a depth of feeling to which he was but little accustomed. "Speak not so even in jest."

"Come then, MacDonells," cried Angus again, "let our gathering be for the tenth day of the new moon, and let the dastard MacKenzies once more quail before our triumphant war cry of Craggan-an-Fhithick!"

"Craggan-an-Fhithick!" re-echoed the clans-

men, with a shout that might have rent the rafters; and deep pledges instantly went round to the success of the expedition."

At this moment Ronald MacDonell, the chief's younger son, a shrewd boy of some eight or ten years of age, entered the hall,—

"What has become of the stranger in the green plaid?" cried he eagerly.

"He is gone," answered several voices at once.

"Then was he a foul and traitorous spy," said the boy. "When my brother was speaking about the raid, I perceived that he was devouring every word he was uttering. His grey eye showed no friendly sympathy. I resolved to watch him, and the more I did so, the more were my suspicions strengthened. I was struck with the dirty state of his plaid. As it was green, it might have been MacIntyre. But to make sure of this, I borrowed old nurse's sheers, and whilst he was intent on what Angus was saying, I contrived to get near to him unperceived, and I clipped away this fragment, which nurse has since washed—and see!" said he, holding it up to the light of a lamp that all might have a view of it. "See! it has the

alternate white and red sprainge of a base and double-faced MacKenzie!"

"MacKenzie, indeed, by all that is good!" cried the old chief. "Out after him, and take him alive or dead!"

"Fly!—after him!—out! out!—let us scour the country!—haste, haste!—out, out!" were the impatient cries that burst from every one in the hall, and in an instant there was a rushing, and a running, and a mounting in haste, and a flying off in all directions. Shouts came from different quarters without the castle walls; and by-and-bye all was silence, for those who had gone in various ways after the fugitive were already out of hearing; and after a night of fruitless toil, they returned in wet and draggled parties of two and three, each expecting to hear those accounts of success from others which they themselves had it not in their power to give, and all were equally disappointed.

It now suits my narrative best to leave the Castle of Invergarry for a while, in order to notice what passed some little time afterwards in that of Eilean Donan, where Kenneth MacKenzie, Lord

Kintail, was seated in his lady's apartment, trifling away the hours. A page entered in haste.

"My lord," said he, "Hector MacKenzie of Beauly is here, and would fain have an audience."

"Hector of Beauly!" exclaimed Lord Kintail, "what I wonder can he want? With your leave, my lady, let him be admitted. Hector," continued his lordship as his clansman entered, "where have you come from, you look famished and jaded?"

"'Tis little wonder if I do, my lord," said Hector, "for the last meal of meat that I ate, and though good enough of its kind, it was but a short one, was in the Castle of Invergarry."

"The Castle of Invergarry!" cried his Lordship in astonishment.

"Aye, in the Castle of Invergarry, my Lord," continued Hector; "and if my meal there was short, I have had a long enough walk after it to help me to digest what I ate."

"Are you in your right mind, Hector?" demanded his Lordship. "Quick, explain yourself."

"I cannot say that I altogether intended to honour the Glengarry chief's board with my pre-

sence," said Hector, drawing himself up; "but having some trifling occasion of my own to pass through the Glengarry country, I rolled my plaid in a moss-hole, and took the wildest way over the hills; and thinking that I might pass unnoticed amidst the darkness and howling of a most tempestuous night, I ventured so near to the castle, that before I knew where I was, a band of MacDonells were suddenly upon me. Seeing that there was nothing else for it but to brave the danger, I had presence of mind enough to pass myself for a MacIntyre,—was invited into the castle, —sat at the same table, and feasted with the old raven and his vassals, and heard that young half-fledged corby Angus MacDonell, plan and arrange a raid of the whole clan Conell and its dependant families against the MacKenzie country. Taking me for a MacIntyre, he told me to bear his message to him to whom I owed service. To give obedience to his will, therefore, I have travelled without stop or stay, or meat or drink, save wh[illegible] I took from the running brooks by the way, i[illegible] der that I may now tell you, my Lord, to whom I owe service as my chief, that the MacDonells' gathering is to be for the tenth day of the moon,

when their fire and sword will run remorseless through our land."

"Hector, you are a brave man," said Lord Kintail, "you shall be rewarded for this. Meanwhile hasten to procure some refreshment and repose; for assuredly you must sorely need both."

I presume that it is scarcely necessary for me to tell you that Lord Kintail and his lady had a speedy and very anxious consultation together. She was a woman of very superior talents, of quick perception, and equally ready in devising expedients, as prompt in carrying them into execution. It was at once agreed between them, that this was too serious and impending a danger to admit of delay in preparing to resist it. Feeling, as they did, that the clan had not yet altogether gathered its strength since the last sweeping raid which old Donald MacAngus, chief of the clan Conell, had committed on their territories, both saw the necessity of losing no time in procuring all the foreign [illegible] they could obtain. It was therefore agreed [illegible] een them as the best precaution that could be taken, that Lord Kintail should forthwith set out [illegible] Mull to procure auxiliary troops from his friend and kinsman MacLean. Preparations

were instantly made accordingly in perfect secrecy for his departure; and in the course of little more than an hour after the communication of Hector's intelligence, his Lordship's galley stood out of Loch Duich and through the Kyles of Skye, and left the straits with as fair a north-eastern breeze as if he had bought it from some witch for the very purpose of wafting him to Mull. But secrets are difficult to keep; for notwithstanding the privacy of all these arrangements, not only Lord Kintail's destination, but the cause and object of his voyage was known. Had the discovery been traced, perhaps it might have been found to have originated with my lady's woman, from whom it gradually spread, until it was quickly whispered, with every proper and prudential caution as to silence, into every ear in the Castle of Eilean Donan, whence it spread like wildfire over the whole district.

The MacDonells too, could have their scouts as well as the MacKenzies. When the hubbub occasioned by the hurried and hopeless chase after the false MacIntyre had subsided, a patient, painstaking, and most sagacious Highlander set off to try what he could make of it; and having once found

a trace of the track the MacKenzie had taken, he never lost sight of it again, until he had followed him so far into the enemy's territories, that he had to thank a most ingenious disguise which he wore for saving his neck from being brought into speedy acquaintance with the gallows tree of Eilean Donan. This man returned immediately to Invergarry with the intelligence that the projected raid of the MacDonells was as well known in Kintail as it was in Glengarry, and that Lord Kintail himself had gone to Mull to procure the powerful aid of his cousin MacLean.

Young Angus of Glengarry was furious when he found that all his schemes, so well laid as he thought they had been, for establishing his own glory and that of the clan, had been thus baffled.

"If that yellow-bearded buck's-head shall ever chance to cross my path again," said he, "young as my arm is, he shall have a trial of my sword."

"Thy spirit is good, boy," said Allan of Lundy; "'tis like that of your father and your grandfather before you. But it will be wise in you to check its rashness, until your sinews are better able to back it up. That same Hector MacKen-

zie whom we saw here among us, is moulded for some other sort of work, than to give and take gentle buffets with a boy."

"Thank thee, kind kinsman, for thy care of me," replied Angus, in any thing but an agreeable tone.

"'Tis true what Allan says," observed the old chief. "I rejoice in thy spirit, boy; it recals to me mine own early days. But for the sake of the Clan Conell, to whom your life is precious, and," added he, with a voice that age, or perhaps some strong feeling operating upon age, made faulter,—"and for the sake of your old father, who doats upon you,—for the sake of your sainted mother,—let me not have to mourn over the too early fate of her first-born!"

"I shall not be rash,—I shall be prudent, father," replied Angus, considerably touched by the old man's appeal. "But why should we not hasten to strike some blow ere their succours shall have time to arrive?"

"There is something in that," said Allan of Lundy. "And since my young cousin so burns to flesh his maiden sword, there can be no safer

way of his doing so, or with the certainty of a more easy victory, than by making a sudden attack on the shores of Loch Carron."

"Safety!—easy victory!" muttered the young chief, with an expression of offended dignity and ineffable contempt. "But 'tis well," added he, too much filled with joy at having any enterprise at all in prospect, to allow any other feeling to occupy his mind for a moment; "let us not lose time in talk. If we are to move with the hope of a surprise, it were fitting that not one moment be lost. Let all within reach be speedily summoned. By to-morrow's dawn we must march to Loch Hourn, where our galleys are lying. Said I not well now, father?"

"Let it be so then, my son," said the chief, with a sigh which he could not check; "and oh! may all that is good attend and guard you!"

The sun rose with unclouded splendour over the mountains to the eastward of Loch Carron, and poured out a stream of golden radiance over the surface of its waters, which were gently lifted into tiny waves by a western breeze. The whole of this Highland scene was glowing and smiling. The early smoke was tinged with brighter tints of

orange, blue, and yellow, as it curled upwards from the humble chimnies of the cottages which were scattered singly or in small groups among irregular shreds of cultivation, that brightened the stripe of land bordering the shore. The whole happy population was astir, and little boats were pushing forth from every creek amidst the sparkling waves, their crews eagerly engaged in preparing their nets and lines for fishing. Already had some of the old men taken their seats on their accustomed bench, to inhale the fresh breath of life from the pure morning air, and to look listlessly out to sea, that they might idly speculate on the wind and the weather. It was hardly possible that eye could have looked upon a more peaceful scene.

Suddenly some two or three boats, which had gone down the little frith during the night, for the purpose of reaching a more distant fishing ground by the early dawn, were seen returning with all sail, and toiling with every oar. Curiosity first, and then alarm, brought out the inhabitants from the interior of their lowly abodes. The nearer fishing-boats drew their lines and half-spread nets hastily in, and there was one general rush, each individual crew making towards that point of the

shore which was nearest, without any regard to the consideration whether it was the point most adjacent to their home or not. By this time, all eyes were straining seaward, to discover what it was that created all this panic, when, one after another, there came sailing round the distant point, galley after galley, till a considerable fleet of them had appeared, their white sails filled with the favouring breeze, and shining with a borrowed lustre from the rich stream of light that poured aslant upon them from the newly-risen sun.

What a scene of dismay and confusion now arose!—Clamorous discussions began among the timid spectators,—all action seemed to be paralyzed. None appeared to think of arming, where the force of the armament that was advancing was manifestly so resistlessly overwhelming. There were but few who had any doubts as to what clan it might probably belong; and these doubts were speedily removed as the fleet came on, by the appearance of the displayed red eagle, with the black galley that formed the bearings on the broad banner of Glengarry, together with the crest of the raven on the rock, with the appalling motto of *Craggan-an-Fhithick*.

And now a bugle was heard to blow shrilly from the leading vessel, and in an instant the several galleys darted off from one centre towards different parts of the loch; and the defenceless inhabitants of the hamlets and cottages might be seen abandoning their dwellings and flying inland. And no sooner did the prow of each vessel touch the bottom, than the armed men which it contained were seen rushing breast-deep through the tide towards the shore, the broadswords in their hands flashing in the morning light. One band was led by the brave young chief of Glengarry, shouting his war-cry, with the faithful and affectionate Allan of Lundy by his side, intent on little else but to protect his precious charge from harm.

There were but few men of the MacKenzies there to make a stand, and those who tried to do so were scattered, overpowered, and cut down. Wild were the shrieks that arose, as the miserable and comparatively defenceless people, leaving their wretched houses and boats to destruction, and their effects and cattle to be plundered, fled away towards the mountains. The impatient Angus no sooner reached the dry land, than he rushed impetuously after the flying MacKenzies,

—and soon indeed did he overtake the rearward; but it was composed of the women, the aged, and the young; and these he passed by and left unharmed behind him to press on after those who might be more worthy of his sword. On he hurried for miles after the fugitives, calling on them from time to time to halt and yield to him but one fighting man as an opponent. But his appeal was in vain; and tired, and disappointed, and chagrined, he stopped to breathe, and he gnashed his teeth in a disappointment which even the friendly counsels of Allan of Lundy could not allay.

"I'll warrant I could soon catch those caitiffs who are disappearing so swiftly over the hill-top yonder," said he; "but I care less-to-day about taking the life of a MacKenzie or two, than I do about keeping the MacKenzies from taking thine."

"Thank ye, cousin," replied Angus, his mortification by no means moderated by this well-meant speech. "I hope this arm will defend the citadel of my life's blood from all harm, without other aid."

As Angus returned slowly towards the shore, he was somewhat shocked to discover that some of his followers had been less scrupulous in the use of

their swords than he had been; and he met with spectacles which informed him of deeds of atrocity and of blood wantonly perpetrated. He beheld those cottages in flames which were lately smoking in peace; and his heart smote him that he was now too late to prevent that carnage in which the grey hairs of the old were blended in one common slaughter with the fair locks of the young and helpless.

There was no glorious triumph or splendid achievement to gild the horrors of this day, or to stifle that disgust which they naturally excited in a young man even of those times. Little pride or pleasure had he in the miserable articles of plunder which he saw his ruthless clansmen bearing off with blood-stained hands to their galleys; and he sat him down with Allan of Lundy, in a faint and feverish state of disquietude of mind on one of those patriarchal benches, which had been so lately and so placidly occupied by some of those elders of the hamlet whose lips were now cold, and whose hearts had now ceased to beat. I need not tell how long the young chief was compelled to tarry there, in the endurance of thoughts that bid defiance to all repose of mind, until he beheld the various ban-

of skirmishers return each to its own vessel, after having spread ravage and devastation, and fire and sword, and murder, far and wide around that which was lately so happy a district.

It happened that the Lady Kintail had gone on the battlements of her castle of Eilean Donan, in order to enjoy the fresh air and the beautiful scenery of those twin sea-lochs which branch off from one another at the spot near to which that rocky island lies which gives name to the building that stands upon it, when, as she cast her eyes northward, she beheld a scattered crowd of people rushing down towards the point which creates the narrow ferry of Loch Ling. Some boats were moored there, and as she saw them hastily loose and put to sea to cross over to the castle, her anxiety to know what news they bore became so great, that she hurried down to the little cove where the landing-place was, that she might the sooner gain the intelligence they brought.

"The MacDonells!" cried these scared and unhappy people. "The MacDonells are upon us, lady! They have burnt and harried all Loch Carron! and, och hone! we are ruined men!"

"Och aye, my lady! och hone! we're all har-

ried, and murdered, and burned!" cried some half a dozen of them at once.

"Answer me like rational men," said the Lady Kintail impatiently, "and do not rout and roar like a parcel of stray beeves. How is 't, say ye? the MacDonell!"

And then proceeding to question them, she, by degrees, gathered from them that which had at least some resemblance to a true statement of what had happened.

The lady was nothing daunted by all she heard. Her first step was to despatch certain trustworthy scouts to reconnoitre, and to bring her accurate information how matters stood; and then she retired to hold council with some of those leaders among her clansmen in whom she had most confidence. With their advice and assistance, every precaution was immediately taken to secure the safety of the castle, as well as to receive into it such a garrison and stock of provisions as might enable her to hold it out until her husband's return, against whatever force might be brought to attack it; and her heroic heart beat so high with the resolute determination of resistance, that she felt something like a pang of disappointment, when

her scouts returned with intelligence that taught her to believe she had no reason to expect any assault. One of her people, who was no other than Hector of Beauly, brought back the most perfect information regarding the motions of the enemy. They were already glutted with slaughter, cumbered with spoil, and, in a great measure, sickened of their enterprise; and, from the top of a hill, he had seen their gallies weighing to stand out of Loch Carron.

"They are tired of their raid for this time," said the lady with bitterness. "It has been undertaken, I'll warrant, but as a first fleshing for that young corby of an evil nest,—that Angus MacDonell; and his young beak having been once blooded by this mighty exploit done against women, old men, and children, he will be carried home to croak his triumph to his dotard old sire, and then he will be mewed up in safety till his wings grow long enough to admit of his flying in earnest. Would I had a good man or two who would deliver him a message from me, as he passes homewards through the Kyle Rhea in his dastard flight to Loch Hourn."

Now, as we have no map here, I must remind

you that there are three sea-lochs on that part of the coast of Scotland, all of which debouche into the western sea. Of these Loch Carron is the most northerly, and Loch Hourn the most southerly, and that Loch Duich, which lies between both, opens through the expansion at its mouth, which is called Loch Alsh, into the narrow strait between the Isle of Skye and the mainland, which is called the Kyle Rhea.

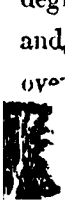
"Would I had a good man or two who would deliver a message from me to that young chough Angus MacDonell as he passes through the Kyle Rhea," repeated the lady.

"That most willingly will I, most noble lady," cried Hector of Beauly. "Have I not carried one message from the young Glengarry to my lord, and shall I not claim the honour of carrying that which the Lady Kintail has to send to the young Glengarry?"

"Thanks, gallant Hector!" replied the lady. "Then shalt thou speak it from the mouth of a cannon! Trust me thou shalt make him hear on the deafest side of his head."

Then calling him aside, she quickly explained to him the scheme she had conceived; and d[illegible]

him to select the individuals whom he should most wish to have in his party, and to choose the boat which he considered best fitted for such an expedition, she ordered two small cannon to be put on board, together with sufficient ammunition for their use; and as no time was to be lost, he and his brave and well-armed companions leaped immediately into the little craft, and pushed off. They pulled with all their strength, and with the utmost expedition, down through Loch Alsh to that isolated rock called the *Cailleach*, which lies close off the eastern angle of the Isle of Skye, and near to the northern entrance of the narrow strait of the Kyle Rhea. There they secretly ensconced themselves to await the return of the MacDonells.

The night fell cold and calm, and the moon arose clear and bright, illuminating every part of these narrow seas, and every headland and rock that projected into them from either shore. It was in the latter part of the year; and by slow degrees some fleecy clouds arose from the horizon, and, after spreading themselves like a film of gauze over the expanse of heaven, they thickened in  s into denser masses, whence, as they passed head, some small, thin, and light particles of

snow began to fall gently and rarely, such as the sky usually sends down as its first wintry offering to the earth. This was enough to complete the concealment of the party, hid as they were beneath the shadowy side of the rock, without much obscuring the surface of the sea elsewhere. There then they lay, with every thing prepared, waiting impatiently for their prey.

At length a distant sound of oars was heard, for there was not a breath of air in these land-locked seas to render a sail available; and the breaking of the billows on the shore, though hoarse, was neither so loud nor so frequent as to disturb the listeners. All ears, and all eyes too, were on the stretch. The measured sound of the oars grew stronger, keeping time to a low murmuring chaunt which proceeded from those who pulled them, more for the purpose of preserving the regularity of the stroke, than for any music that they might have made. By-and-bye a galley appeared, dimly seen at some distance, and, as it drew nearer, it was at once known to be that which contained young Angus MacDonell, from the broad banner that floated over it, though there was not light enou[redacted] to descry the bearings of Glengarry.

"Now, my gallant cannoneers," said Hector to those who had the charge of the small pieces of artillery, "be prepared. Remember, when I give the word, you go first, Ian, and then you are to follow, Hamish, in about as much time as you might easily count ten without hurrying yourself. But fail not to attend to my word. In the meanwhile, see that you level well."

On came the young chief's galley. It approached the rock with a course which pointed to pass it clear at some fathoms distance to the westward of it. But whilst it was yet in progress towards it, Hector, with great expedition and adroitness, pointed his first piece, and watched his time; and his fatal

"Now!" resounded over the surface of the deep.

Ere yet the lintstock had been applied to the touch-hole, the galley was seen to quiver. Every motion of it indicated the alarm that had already been struck into its crew and helmsman by this ominous word. But the *boom!* of the first gun followed with the quickness of lightning; and the accuracy of the shot was told by the crashing of the balls with which it had been crammed upon the timbers of the hull and upper works, as well as by the curs-

ing and confusion of the people on board, the groans and plaints of the wounded, and the swerving of the galley from its course.

"That has done some small work; I'll warrant," said Hector as he stooped to point the second piece. "Are you ready, Hamish? Now!"

And *boom!* went the second gun with yet more decided effects. In the panic produced by this shot the helm was left to itself,—the oars were abandoned,—the galley swung round with the tide, and in a few seconds it was driven full upon the rock.

"Angus of Glengarry!" cried a voice like thunder. "I, Hector MacKenzie, bore thy message to him to whom I owe service, and I have now brought thee the answer!"

Singling out the young chief, and springing upon him like a tiger, he stabbed him to the heart with a left-handed blow of his dirk, ere the unhappy youth had recovered his footing from the shock which the little vessel received on the rock. The next moment saw his corse floating on the waves.

But Hector's broadsword was instantly needed to defend his own head. Desperate was the conflict which Allan of Lundie maintained with this

hero of the MacKenzies. There was something awful in the wild yells of the combatants,—the clashing of their claymores,—the groans of the dying,—and the choking and gasping of the drowning. The very sea-birds, which had been roused in clouds by the flash and roar of the two cannon shots, and which had soared about for some moments, screaming in affright at this rude and unwonted intrusion upon their solitary slumbers, now winged themselves in terror away. The crew of the galley were in a few seconds overpowered from the vantage ground possessed by the assailants, as well as by the sudden nature of the assault itself; and the slaughter was dreadful. The fearless Allan of Lundie fought furiously hand to hand with Hector, backed as the MacKenzie champion was by those who came to aid him after putting their own opponents to death. Terrific were the blows he dealt around him, and murderous were the wounds inflicted by the broad blade of his sweeping sword. But the number of those who were thus opposed to him individually went on increasing as his people fell around him, until all were gone; and he saw that he must be overwhelmed and taken if he should any longer at-

tempt to continue his resistance. At once he took the resolution, and bounding boldly into the air, he dived into the bosom of the sea, leaving his astonished enemies filled with doubt and suspense as to his fate.

"He's food for the fishes like the rest of them," said some of the MacKenzies.

"The foul fiend catch him but yonder he goes!" cried one of them, as he saw him rise to the surface at some distance from the rock.

"To your oars, men of Kintail!" cried Hector, "to your oars I say, and let him not escape!"

Meanwhile stoutly did Allan of Lundy breast the tide, and so great was the confusion that prevailed among the Kintail men, that ere they could push off the boat, man the oars, and make her start ahead, the powerful swimmer had made considerable way against the billows. Soon, however, would they have diminished the distance he had gained, and soon would he have been the prey of those who thirsted so eagerly for his life, had not the other gallies at that moment appeared; their prows bearing gallantly onwards with the favouring tide, making the sea foam and hiss again with the sweep of their numerous oars, and the rapid

rush of their course. In an instant the Kintail boat altered the direction of her head, and shot away off in a westerly direction; her rowers bending to their work like men who were anxious to escape from a pursuing danger. Allan with the Red Jacket was easily recognised amid the waves; but ere they could get him into the galley that first came up, the boat of the MacKenzies was already lost to their eyes in the gloom that brooded over the more distant part of the straits. Hopeless of overtaking her, the MacDonells, after bewailing the calamity that had befallen them, and looking for some time in vain for the remains of their young leader, pursued their sad and darksome voyage, with the pipes playing a wailing lament, until they reached Loch Hourn, whence most of them were to prosecute their melancholy march back to Invergarry Castle.

The lady of Kintail was no sooner informed of the success of her enterprise, than she dispatched a quick-sailing boat to the island of Mull to bear the news to her lord. This boat was observed to pass southwards by the MacDonells, as they were lying by for a short repose. The object of its voyage

was quickly guessed at, but Allan of Lundie judged it unwise to interrupt it.

"It is toiling to work out our revenge," said he to his people. "It goes to invite the lord of Kintail homewards. See that ye who are to tarry here, keep a lively watch for him, and so shall his blood pay for that of our lamented young chief. Would that I could have remained to have wreaked my vengeance on his head! But I have other duties to perform,—I must go to sooth a bereaved father's sorrow. Alas! how shall I break the news of this sad affliction to the old man!"

I need hardly tell you that the old chief of the MacDonells remained in a state of extreme mental anxiety after the departure of Angus with the expedition. He felt that not only the honour of the clan, but the honour and the life of his son, were at stake. He was restless and unhappy; yea, he cursed himself and his feeble limbs because he had not been able to go, as he was once wont to do, at the head of his people. Twenty times in the course of every hour did he fancy that he heard the triumphant clangour of the pipes played to his son's homeward march, and as often was he disappointed.

At last something like their shrill music at a distance did strike upon his ear.

"Hah!" cried he with an excited countenance, "heard ye that?—my boy comes at last. Heard ye not the sound? Though I be old, yet is mine ear sharp when it watches for the coming of my gallant boy! Help me to the barbican, that I may behold him! Well do I remember the time when I first came back in triumph! It was on that memorable occasion when —— Merciful Heaven!" exclaimed he after a pause, occasioned by the unexpected appearance at that moment of Allan of Lundy, who had come on before the rest, and who now entered the hall with downcast and sorrowful looks, and with his arms folded across his bosom. "Merciful Heaven! Speak Allan! Tell me why look ye so sad? Where is my Angus? Where is my boy?"

"Alas! alas!" said Allan of Lundy, "I cannot —cannot tell thee that it is well with him."

"What!—wounded?" cried the old chief," so was I in my first field. He must look for such fate as fell to the lot of those who have lived before him."

"Alas! alas!" cried Allan of Lundy, weeping

at the old man's words, "Alas! his fate has indeed come too soon!"

"Hush!" said the old chief, suddenly starting and stretching his ear to listen. "What strains are these the bagpipes are playing?—a *coronach!* Ah! then am I a bereft father! Oh! my boy! —bereft!—bereft!—bereft!" And springing convulsively from his chair, he smote his breast violently, his head turned convulsively round to one side, his neck suddenly stiffened, his eyes rolled fearfully, and then protruding themselves from their sockets, they became horribly fixed and glazed, his breath rattled in his throat, and sinking back into his chair, he had died before Allan of Lundy could rush forward to his aid.

Now indeed did the *coronach* raise its wild lament on the pipes, the women mixing with it their wailings, and the men their groans. It was for their old chief—their ancient strength, Donald MacAngus MacDonell, and for the young and promising flower of their hopes, Angus, the eldest son and heir of Donald. The days of mourning, though not long, were sad, and the funeral obsequies of the chief were performed with all the solemnity and pageantry, and ceremonial that were due to

them, whilst those of his son were denied to them by the unhappy nature of his death.

The council of the clan had already determined that Allan of Lundy should govern for the young Ronald, who being in boyhood was deemed quite unfit for so weighty and important a charge. The experienced warrior assumed the important trust with his usual boldness and confidence, though altogether overpowered by that honest and unfeigned grief which oppressed his heart for the loss of these relatives whom he had so long held dear. But his warlike and revengeful spirit was not long suffered to remain so clouded, for he had hardly been installed in the situation, to which the universal suffrages of the clan had raised him, when a breathless messenger from Loch Hourn entered the hall.

"What news?" cried Allan impatiently—"say, has the young blood of our lamented Angus been avenged? Has the red tide from Kintail's heart been mingled with the angry currents of the narrow seas?"

"Alas, no!" replied the messenger, "no such good fortune has attended us!"

"How then?" demanded Allan, "methinks

that if your leader had but followed the simple guidance which I gave him ere we parted, our grief might have been now somewhat assuaged, by the thought that we had made that woman a widow, who hath caused our woe, and that clan mourners who were rejoicing over the grief which they have wrought to us. But speak quickly, what hath happened?"

"Your counsel was strictly followed," replied the messenger. "Our fleet of boats were all ready to be launched, and our men were lying prepared to embark at the first signal. Whilst all were on the watch, a galley appeared in sight, and we began to hurry on board. Suddenly we perceived that she was steering directly for the island where we lay, and we all went on shore again in the belief that she was the vessel with those friends we looked for from Ardnamurchan."

"Quick, quick!—what then?" cried Allan of Lundy.

"On she came with her prow direct towards the port," replied the messenger, "and she continued to keep it so till she came within hail of the very entrance of it. Then the pipes played up *Cabar Fiadh*, and, ere she tacked to bear away again

with all her oars out and hoisting her canvass to the uttermost, a hoarse voice came thundering from on board,—'The Lord Kintail here sends you his greeting by the hands of his captain, the captain of Cairnburgmore;' and in the same moment, they poured out so murderous a storm of bullets from their falconets, upon us who were then actively launching our boats to be after her, that many of our men were killed and wounded. The confusion among us was great, and she escaped to so great a distance before we were ready to pursue, that all pursuit became vain."

"Curses be on her and on her crew!" cried Allan of Lundy, gnashing his teeth in bitterness; "it seems as if some fiend helped them! Curses be on Cairnburgmore! and curses be on the freight his galley carried! But I will be revenged on these MacKenzies! Here I swear," continued he drawing his sword and striking it against the banner of the MacDonell, that was then floating at the upper end of the hall. "Here do I solemnly swear to make so terrible a reprisal on the MacKenzies, that men's flesh shall creep upon their bones as they listen to the tale of it; and yet shall it be but as an earnest of what I shall inflict on

that accursed clan for the grief and sorrow they have so lately wrought us !"

These then, gentlemen, were the circumstances that preceded and gave birth to the celebrated Raid of Killychrist, and after so long a preliminary history, I shall now hasten to give you the particulars of that horrible piece of atrocity.

It was Saturday, and the most active preparations were instantly ordered by Allan of Lundy to be made for a night-march. He had heard that there was to be a numerous gathering of the MacKenzies next day in the church of Killychrist, or Christ's Church, a short mile or two above the little town and priory of Beauly. Putting himself at the head of a determined band of followers therefore, he took his way across the mountains with inconceivable expedition, so that he found himself, early on the Sunday morning, in the heart of the MacKenzie country, and crossing the river Beauly, he was soon at the church of Killychrist, and he surrounded it with his MacDonells before any of his miserable victims were in the least aware of his presence.

The church was filled with all ranks of the clan, but there was a great proportion of the higher class

among them. Psalms were singing, and all within the sacred building were absorbed in that attention or abstraction which attends real or pretended devotion.

Suddenly the doors were taken possession of by the armed MacDonells, with the grim and unrelenting Allan of Lundy at their head. In an instant the nasal chaunt of the psalmody was drowned by the screams of the timid, who already saw nothing but death before them, and by the exclamations of those who sought to make resistance, and to fight their way through their foes. But utterly impervious were the serried spear points that bristled through the low-arched doorways, as well as through every narrow lancet window of the holy fane; and stern and resolute, and utterly devoid of feeling, were the war-scarred countenances of those whose ferocious eyes glared in upon them.

All was now panic and confusion among the MacKenzies, who filled the area of the church, where individuals crowded and jostled so against other, that few could draw a dirk, much less more from its sheath. Meanwhile shouts were heard without, and immediately afterwards those of the MacDonells, who kept the doors and

windows, gave way for one single instant,—but it was only to admit of the approach of a number of their comrades, who speedily threw in heaps of blazing faggots, together with stifling balls of rosin and sulphur, and other combustibles. In an instant the ancient carved screens and other woodwork of the interior were ignited, and the very clothes of the unfortunate people caught fire; and still heaps upon heaps of inflammable materials were hurled incessantly inwards, until all within was in one universal blaze.

"They have light enow within I trow,—they lack not light from without," cried the remorseless Allan of Lundy; "shut and fasten the doors and windows, and block them up with sods."

His orders were speedily obeyed, and those within were now left to their agonizing fate; but well I ween, that the fancy of no one can imagine what were the horrors conveyed in those sounds that came half stifled from within the walls of that church. Even to Allan of Lundy, they became utterly intolerable.

"Alister Dhu!" cried he to the piper, "play up, man!—up with your hoarse melody, and drown these sounds of torture and death that fill

our ears, as if we had been suddenly transported to the regions of hell. Play up, I tell you!"

The piper instantly obeyed his command and blew up loud and shrill; and, after having made his instrument give utterance to a long succession of wild and unconnected notes, altogether without any apparent meaning, he began his march around the walls of the church, playing extemporaneously that pibroch, which, under the name of Killychrist, has ever since been used as the Pibroch of Glengarry. For a brief space of time, the horrible sounds which came from within the building, continued to mingle themselves with the clangour of the pipes; but by degrees these became fainter and fainter, and the piper had not made many circles around the church, till the shrieks, the groans, and the wailings had ceased; their spirits had been released from their tortured bodies, and all was silent within its walls.

Allan of Lundy had no desire to unbar this scene of horror, that he might look upon his work ere he went. The preservation of his people, moreover, required that he should retreat as expeditiously as he possibly could. He was well aware that the whole MacKenzie country must very speedily be

alarmed; that all of the clan, who were within reach, would be immediately in arms, and that the body of MacDonells which he had with him would be as a mere handful compared to that of his foes, if he should allow them time to assemble. He moved off therefore with the utmost expedition; but, with all the haste he could use, he could not shake off the MacKenzies, who collected in irregular numbers and followed him, harassing his rear and his flanks, whilst, like a lion retreating before the hunters, he marched on boldly, endeavouring to beat away the assailing crowds, by halting from time to time as he went, and charging back upon them with resistless fury, making many a brave MacKenzie bite the dust. But still they continued to increase in force by fresh accessions.

At length he had recourse to a manœuvre which he hoped might have distracted the attention of his foes. He hastily divided his little band into two parties, and having given secret orders to a trusty leader to start off at the head of one band in the direction of the Bridge of Inverness, and so to pursue his way homewards by the south side of Loch Ness, he commanded the other to follow himself, intending to hold directly onwards over the hills by

the route which they had come during the preceding night. This plan so far succeeded, that the MacKenzies were for some time much baffled and perplexed. But after some considerable delay, they recovered themselves so far as to divide their men also in the same manner; and one large body, under the command of Murdoch MacKenzie of Redcastle, followed hard after the first party of the MacDonells, whilst MacKenzie of Coull, pressed onwards on the retreating steps of the captain of Glengarry.

Availing himself of the temporary check which his pursuers had thus met with, Allan of Lundy and his party made extraordinary exertions, by which they gained so much ground on their pursuers, that they fairly left the MacKenzies out of sight. They were thus enabled to rest for a little while like a tired herd of chased deer, in the hills near the burn of Altsay. But their repose was short. The pack of their enemies, who were following on their track, soon opened in yells like those of hounds when they came in view of them, and they were compelled to stand to their arms. A very sanguinary skirmish was the consequence, fought with great success on the part of the MacDonells, who slew numbers of their enemies; but this availed them little, for still

the MacKenzies came crowding and gathering on in fresh numbers, whilst the ranks of Glengarry were every moment growing thinner and thinner. Retreat, therefore, became again expedient.

Allan of Lundy made one desperate charge that scattered his foes over the hill-side, and then his bugle unwillingly gave the word of command for his brave MacDonells to retire. They did so with the utmost expedition, and at the same time with all the steadiness and coolness which became them. But as they moved on, many among their number were, from time to time, prostrated and sprinkled, man by man, on the earth, by the distant shots fired at them by their pursuers; and many a gallant clansman fell whilst endeavouring to cover from harm the scarlet-clad body of his leader, that conspicuously attracted the aim of his enemies. At length the number of the MacDonells became so much reduced, and the pursuit waxed so hot, that even a show of resistance was rendered utterly vain.

"Men of Glengarry!" cried Allan of Lundy, "nothing now remains for us but flight. But ere we fly, let us make one more furious onset against these cowardly *Bodachs*. Let us first scatter them to the four winds of heaven, and then, when

I give you a bugle blast, see that ye in your turn flee off suddenly apart, and so let each try to find his own way home. I shall shift well enough for myself. Now charge on them."

Unprepared for this instantaneous assault, the effect of it was tremendous Many of the MacKenzies were slain, and the whole of the remainder were dispersed like a flock of sheep. The MacDonells had hitherto kept together like a ball, but no sooner did they hear the shrill blast of Allan of Lundy's bugle, than they burst asunder, and each individual bounded off in that direction which seemed to offer him the best chance of baffling his pursuers. As hounds are astonished and divided by the sudden appearance of a trip of hares starting all at once from some well-preserved patch of furze, so were the MacKenzies confused by this new expedient of their enemies. For some time they stood confounded, until at last they gathered into little irregular bands, each of which followed that fugitive to whom the eyes of those that composed it were accidentally directed. But the splendid scarlet jacket of Allan of Lundy, which was as well known to the MacKenzies as to the MacDonells, and which upon this occasion particularly

struck them as participating in the hue of that element which had recently done so cruel work upon the miserable wretches at Killychrist, drew on him the fixed attention of by far the greatest body. This was exactly what he wished for, as he saw that in this way even his flight would be the means of contributing to the safety of his men.

"After the firebrand!" cried a powerful and athletic champion of the MacKenzies. "It is Allan with the Red Jacket himself. After him! See where he flies along the slope! But I'm thinking that there is something yonder afore him that will bring him to a check! After him!—after him!"

Like greyhound freed from the slips, did this leader of the MacKenzies, and a great mass of those who followed him, burst away after Allan of Lundy, who seemed to devour the very ground by the rapidity of his flight, and the crowd of those that were after him, very soon showed a long tail like that of a comet.

The MacKenzie champion, who had cheered them on to the pursuit, soon shot far a-head of the great body of his party, some five or six of whom only could keep at all near him. He was well

aware that the MacDonell had taken a course which must lead him to a fearful ravine,—a yawning chasm, something not much less than twenty feet in width, that seemed to sink black and fearful into that eternal night which may be supposed to exist in the bowels of the earth. The very stream that was heard to rush through it was there invisible. It was this that the MacKenzie leader had counted on as certain to prove a check to the flying Allan of Lundy. But little did he know that the bold hero of the MacDonells, trusting in his wonderful powers, had taken this very course with the hope of being thereby enabled to rid himself entirely of his pursuers. As Allan flew with a velocity that seemed to vie with that of the heath-cock, as he skims over the heather tops on a hill-side, he looked now and then over his shoulder to ascertain the state of the pursuit; and perceiving, as he came within a few yards of the ravine, that the MacKenzie leader was considerably in advance of the handful of stragglers who toiled after him, he halted, and planted himself firmly in a position to await his assault. Nor was this halt of his altogether unseasonable; for his breathing came somewhat hurriedly for a few moments; but be-

fore his enemy came near to him, his lungs were again playing easily; and if his erect bosom heaved at all, it did so more with indignation and contemptuous defiance, than from over exertion. The MacKenzie champion came to a stop within ten paces of him whom he had been pursuing.

"Now!" cried he, whilst his words came thick and half-smothered by the exhaustion under which he laboured. "Now!—Now, Allan of the Red Jacket!—Now I have got ye!—The last time we met, you escaped from this good claymore by diving like a duck. Do so now, if ye can. Dive now, if ye dare, or stand like a man, and face Hector MacKenzie of Beauly,—Hector MacKenzie, who slew"——

"Villain!" cried Allan of Lundy, "you need say no more. I thank thee for thus recalling to me thine accursed visage and name. The very sight of thee gives a new edge to this reeking blade of mine."

Allan of Lundy rushed furiously at his foe, who advanced a step or two to meet him. A terrible single combat ensued. But active and adroit as the MacDonell leader had ever proved himself to be as a swordsman, he found in Hector MacKen-

zie of Beauly a cool, an experienced, and a powerful opponent. Conscious that his adversary had at that moment the advantage of him as to wind, and being aware that some five or six stark fellows of his own clan were fast nearing the scene of action, he saw that his game lay in protracting the fight, till numbers on his side might make his enemy an easy prey. He contented himself therefore with guarding and parrying the furious and not always well-directed cuts and thrusts of Allan of Lundy, until his aid should arrive to render his victory sure. They did come up at last, panting like overrun blood-hounds; and the brave MacDonell had just presence of mind enough to see, that if he meant to save his life from that certain destruction that awaited it, from the fearful odds by which he was so speedily to be surrounded, he had no time to lose. With one desperate cut, which, though guarded, made his adversary reel beneath the very weight of it, he turned suddenly from him, and ran three or four steps towards the ravine—halted—threw back on his enemies a withering look of rage and scorn,—and then darting towards the yawning gulph, he sprang over its fearful separation with the bound of a stag, and

uttering a taunting laugh, he quietly leant upon his sword on the opposite bank to await the issue. The followers of Hector MacKenzie shuddered involuntarily as he sprang, but impelled by the rage of disappointment, Hector himself flew towards the chasm. He checked for a moment on the very brink, with his plumed bonnet thrown back, and his arms and sword high in air; and then casting one wild and searching look into the abyss that yawned beneath his feet, he retreated a few steps, and nerving himself with all his resolution, he flew at the desperate leap.

"He is over!" shouted one MacKenzie.

"God be here, he is down!" cried another.

Neither of them were accurately right. He had failed in clearing the chasm by a single inch. His toes scratched away the loose earth and moss, and down indeed went his feet. His naked claymore dropped from his hand; but he caught at a young birchen sapling that grew from the very verge of the rock. It bent like a rope with his weight, and he hung over the black void into which his trusty weapon had disappeared, and down which it was still heard faintly clanging as it was dashed from side to side in its descent. Allan of Lundy looked re-

morselessly downwards upon the wretched man, whose eyes glared fearfully amidst his convulsed features, as with extended jaws he uttered some incoherent and guttural sounds, which even the horrors of his perilous situation and impending fate could not compel his indomitable spirit to mould into any thing like a petition for mercy from a MacDonell.

"Hector of Beauly!" cried Allan of Lundy, "would that thou hadst but reached this solid ground, claymore in hand! Then, indeed, might my revenge have been sweeter and more to my mind. But thy weird will have it so, and vengeance may not longer tarry. You it was who reft from us young Angus, the hope of our clan; and this day hast thou taken many of my brave fellows from me, and many trophies too hast thou taken. So thou mayest e'en *take that too!*"

With one sweep of his claymore he cut the sapling in twain; and the agonized visage of his powerful foe dropped away and disappeared from his eyes. No shriek was heard; but Allan of Lundy started involuntarily backwards, as a heavy muffled sound came upwards from the descending body, as it grazed against the successive projec-

tions of the chasm; and when the prolonged plunge that arose from an immeasurable depth below, told him of the utter annihilation of what had so lately been a man, as full of life, of action, and of courage, as he still felt himself to be possessed of.

Allan of Lundy stood for some moments as if transfixed to the spot. Wheresoever he gazed around him, the glaring eyeballs and the convulsed features of Hector of Beauly still haunted his imagination. But at length a shot from an arquebuss, that passed very near to him, and cut down a tall plant of *bracken** immediately behind him, brought him back to his recollection. He then saw that a great mass of the pursuing MacKenzies had already joined those two or three men who had so closely followed Hector of Beauly, and these were now gathered on the opposite side of the ravine, raging with fury for the loss of their champion. He felt that it was no time or place for him to halt, to be a butt for them to shoot at. He sprang again like a deer to the hill. But as he climbed its steep face, many were the bullets that were sent whizzing after him. By one of these random shots he was wounded in the leg, not very severe-

* Fern.

ly, but so as to produce a considerable effusion of blood. The MacKenzies saw that he was hit, and like huntsmen marking the effect of their discharge against a deer, they stood for some moments to observe him as he made his way up the hill-side.

"He flags!" cried one.

"He faints!" cried another.

"He is mortally wounded!" cried a third.

"He moves on!" cried a fourth.

"Away! away!" cried another. "Away to the ford above the waterfall. He cannot last long. We shall soon come up with him!"

But the game was of a very superior description to what those who hunted him supposed; and they soon found that he was not quite so easily secured as they had calculated. Before they had made their circuit, in order to cross the stream that poured itself headlong into the ravine which had been so fatal to their champion Hector of Beauly, the red jacket of Allan of Lundy had disappeared over the hill top. But he had left his blood upon his track. A consultation was held as to what was best to be done.

"Let us have Rory Bane's trusty sleuth

hound," said one of them. "See!—yonder is his cottage on the other side of the moss."

The advice was approved of, and with one consent they hastened to procure the dog. The animal was no sooner put upon the trail of the fugitive, than he was like to pull down the man who held his leash. But the steady Highlander kept his hold of him, for he was well aware that if once let slip, the keenness of the animal would lead him on hot foot till he overtook the MacDonell, in which case the creature's death would be sealed long ere they could come up to lend him their aid. In order to benefit by his sagacity, they required to keep with him, and they found it hard enough work to do so. With his leash stretched till its collar almost choked him, he went bounding and yelling after the chase, whitening the very heath as he passed along with the foam of his mouth, and keeping not only the man who held him, but all those who were with him, going at a desperate pace. But still the temporary breathing which the Glengarry leader had enjoyed at the ravine, and the long start which he had gained whilst his pursuers were making their circuit to avoid it, and going out of their way to procure the dog, toge-

ther with the time which the hound took in picking up the scent in parts where Allan of Lundy had forded the mountain streams, enabled that hero, who was so swift and enduring of foot, to reach the great valley of Loch Ness, even before the deep baying of the hound had first struck upon his ear.

Then it was that a shout rang from the echoing face of the mountain that overhung the lake, for his red jacket had been descried by his pursuers, and they redoubled their speed. But Allan of Lundy was now incapable of increasing his. The blood that had continued to drop from his wound as he ran had now left behind it that incipient faintness which the MacKenzies vainly thought had fallen on him at the time when they saw that the shot had told on him. But many miles of rough ground had he since fled over with little diminution of speed; and now the blue waters of Loch Ness stretched as it were from his feet far up between its retreating mountains. And only now it was that he felt a growing weakness, that told him that the chase could not endure a much longer time. Yet still he urged his flying steps, and still the baying of the hound, and the shouts of his pursuers, came nearer and nearer to his rear;

and now and then a bullet would whistle among the foliage of the bushes that grew to right or left of him, or would tear up the turf in his very pathway, as circumstances gave those who followed him a chance view of him, whilst the echoes reverberated the sound of the discharge which had sent it.

Already had he fled for some miles along the rocky and wooded faces of those mountains which arise from the northern side of Loch Ness, stopping from time to time for a few seconds on some knoll-top, to inhale the western zephyrs that blew on him with refreshing coolness from the wilds of Invergarry. But his exertions were so great and so long protracted, that even these, his native breezes, ceased to afford sufficient renovation to his wearied lungs and beating temples. He felt himself growing fainter and fainter, and this, too, when his pursuers, many of whom had but recently joined in the chase, were every minute gaining upon him more and more. Yet still he laboured on until even the very mountains seemed to conspire with his enemies against him. His path became reduced to a narrow and confined track, by the crags which towered above him on one hand, and the precipices that stooped sheer down into

the loch on the other. All chance of escape seemed now to have departed from him. In his despair he flung a hasty glance over the waves that danced below him, and, as he did so, he descried a little boat about half way across the sheet of water, with two or three individuals in it employed in fishing. The shouts of the MacKenzies now pressed closer and closer upon him. Like a striken stag, he took his desperate resolve, and scrambling down to a pointed cliff that jutted out into vacancy over a deep and still part of the lake, he stood for a short time to breathe on its giddy brink. The yells of his enemies rent the air as they rushed wildly onwards to secure their prey, whilst the hound gave forth his deep bass to complete their terrific music. They were almost upon him. He cast his eyes once more downwards, then clasped his arms tightly over his breast, drew in one full draught of breath; and as the MacKenzies were clambering hurriedly along the dangerous path with their eyes fixed eagerly and intently upon his figure, they were astonished and confounded to perceive Allan of Lundy's well-known scarlet jacket shooting like a falling star through some fifty or sixty feet of air into the profound below! So perfectly had he

preserved his perpendicular position during his descent, that he entered the water like an iron rod, so as scarcely to produce a ripple; and the simple action of stretching out his arms having instantly brought him like a cork to the surface, he was seen breasting his way towards the distant boat, with a vigour only to be accounted for from the circumstance, that the action he now used had brought a fresh set of muscles into play. Several random shots were fired at him by the MacKenzies, but unsuccessfully; and he was soon beyond the reach of their bullets.

Grouped upon the point whence he had thus so miraculously sprung, stood his panting and toil-worn pursuers, wondering at this extraordinary effort of his desperation; whilst the disappointed sleuth hound continued to rouse the echoes with his prolonged howlings. And now they eagerly watched the fate of him whom they not unnaturally believed to have escaped from their weapons only to be drowned in the unfathomable depths of the loch. For the little boat was still far from him, much farther than any strong swimmer could well hope to reach; and although he swam stoutly enough at first, they began to perceive that he was striking out

more and more heavily, as if death was fast shackling his powerful sinews.

But now again, to their grievous disappointment, they saw that those in the boat had perceived him, and were pulling lustily towards him.

It happened that the owner of the boat was no other than Fraser of Foyers, who had come out from his own place near the celebrated waterfall of that name, on the south side of the lake, to waste a few idle hours in fishing. He was the staunch ally of the MacDonell; and although he was at a considerable distance from the spot at the time, the meteor descent of the red jacket had struck his eyes so forcibly, that he immediately suspected that something had befallen Allan of Lundy, whose garment he guessed it to be. Having ordered his men to row in the proper direction, he soon began to recognise the red speck forcing its way through the water, and leaving a long line of wake behind it, while the hostile tartans that waved from the verge of the cliff, and the echoes that were awakened by the baying of the hound and the shouts of the men, told him enough of the story to induce him and his rowers to strain every nerve to save the gallant captain of Glengarry. And great as

were their exertions, they were no more than were necessary for effecting their object; for they reached him as he was on the eve of sinking from very exhaustion. Fraser of Foyers had no sooner saved his friend, than he stood up in his boat and gave three hearty cheers, and then hoisting his tiny white sail, he availed himself of a favourable breeze, and bore away for the upper end of the lake, whilst the MacKenzies followed it with their eyes, and continued to pour out maledictions upon it, till it was lost in the yellow haze of the sun-set in the western distance.

The captain of the MacDonells returned to Invergarry Castle, to brood over the dire, though dear-bought revenge he had reaped in this terrible raid. His heart was especially filled with savage joy, whilst ruminating on the dreadful death which he had bestowed on him who had killed his nephew Angus MacDonell. But these triumphant thoughts soon gave way before that ideal phantom of Hector of Beauly, which never ceased to haunt his fevered imagination, and which exhibited the last, despairing, yet resolute look of that bold man, ere Allan of Lundy had cut the only remaining hold he had of earth,

and sent him, as it were, into the very bowels of the infernal regions. Nor did the cries which arose from the burning church of Killychrist ever leave his ears.

But few of the MacDonells who partook of this expedition, survived with their leader. Even those who went round by the bridge of Inverness did not escape; and it was somewhat remarkable that they died by a fate worthy of those who had been engaged in so cruel an expedition. Having been overcome with fatigue, they stopped to refresh themselves in a house of public entertainment near Torbreck, where they supposed that they were beyond all risk of farther attack. But they were wofully mistaken; for MacKenzie of Redcastle having followed them thither with his party, suddenly surrounded them, and burned every one of them to death.

END OF VOL. I.

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